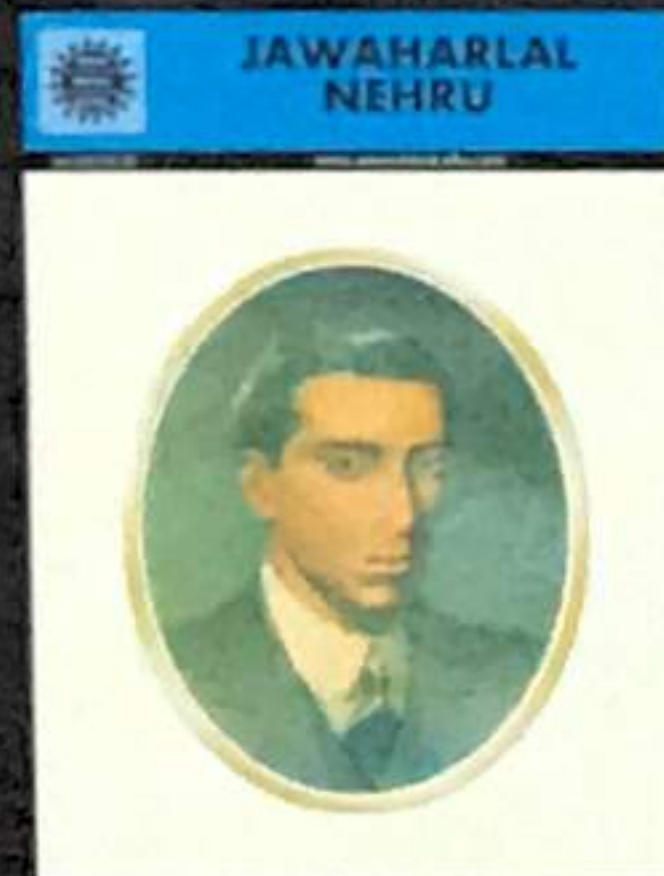


BABASAHEB AMBEDKAR

He was from a respectable family, well-educated and a lawyer, yet many Indians thought of him as 'untouchable'. It was up to BR Ambedkar to teach his 'depressed' community to fight the injustices that it faced each day. Hard working and wise, he became the icon of the underprivileged. History, however, will remember him as the architect of India's Constitution.

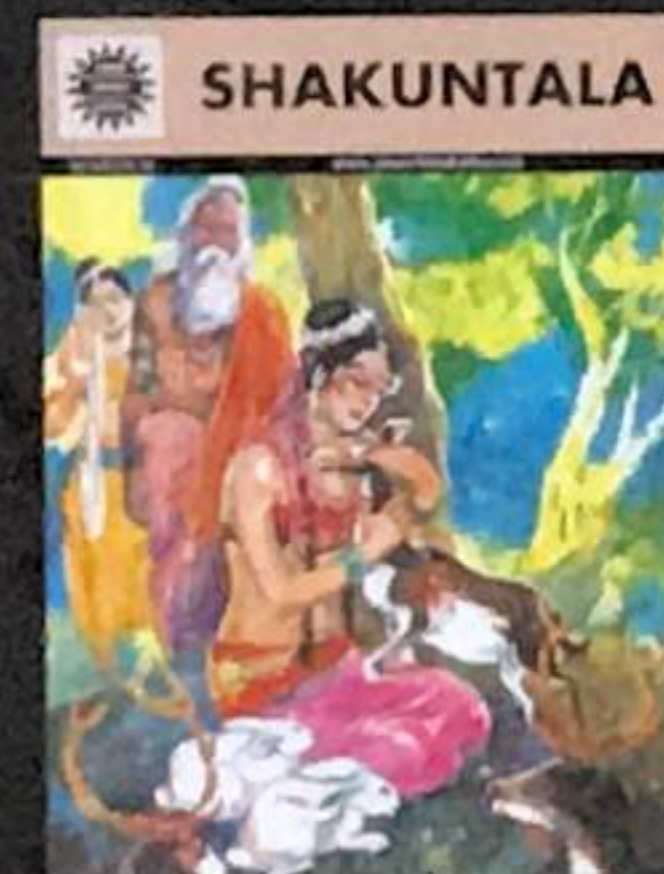
OTHER ACK VISIONARIES:



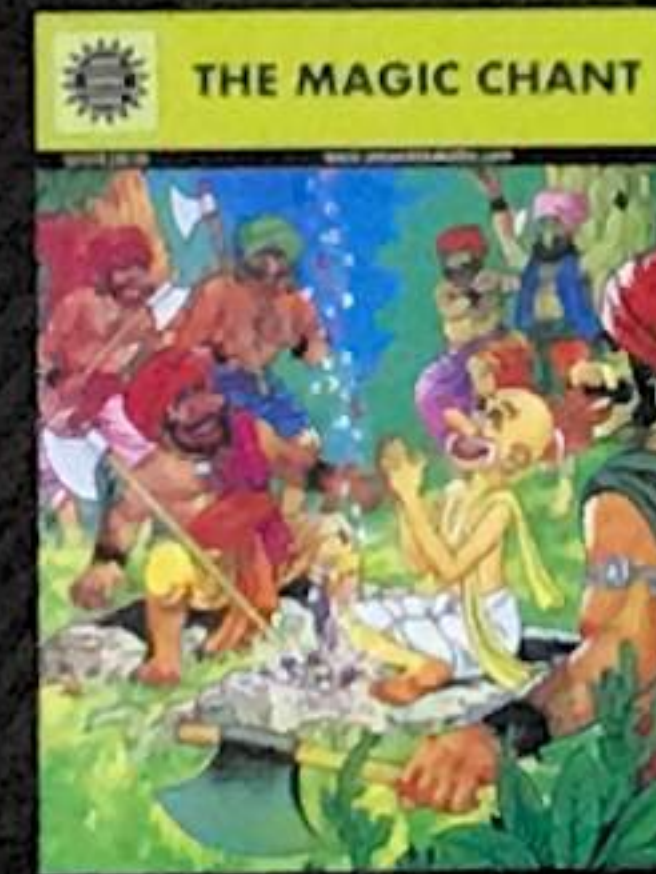
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BABASAHEB AMBEDKAR

HE DARED TO FIGHT

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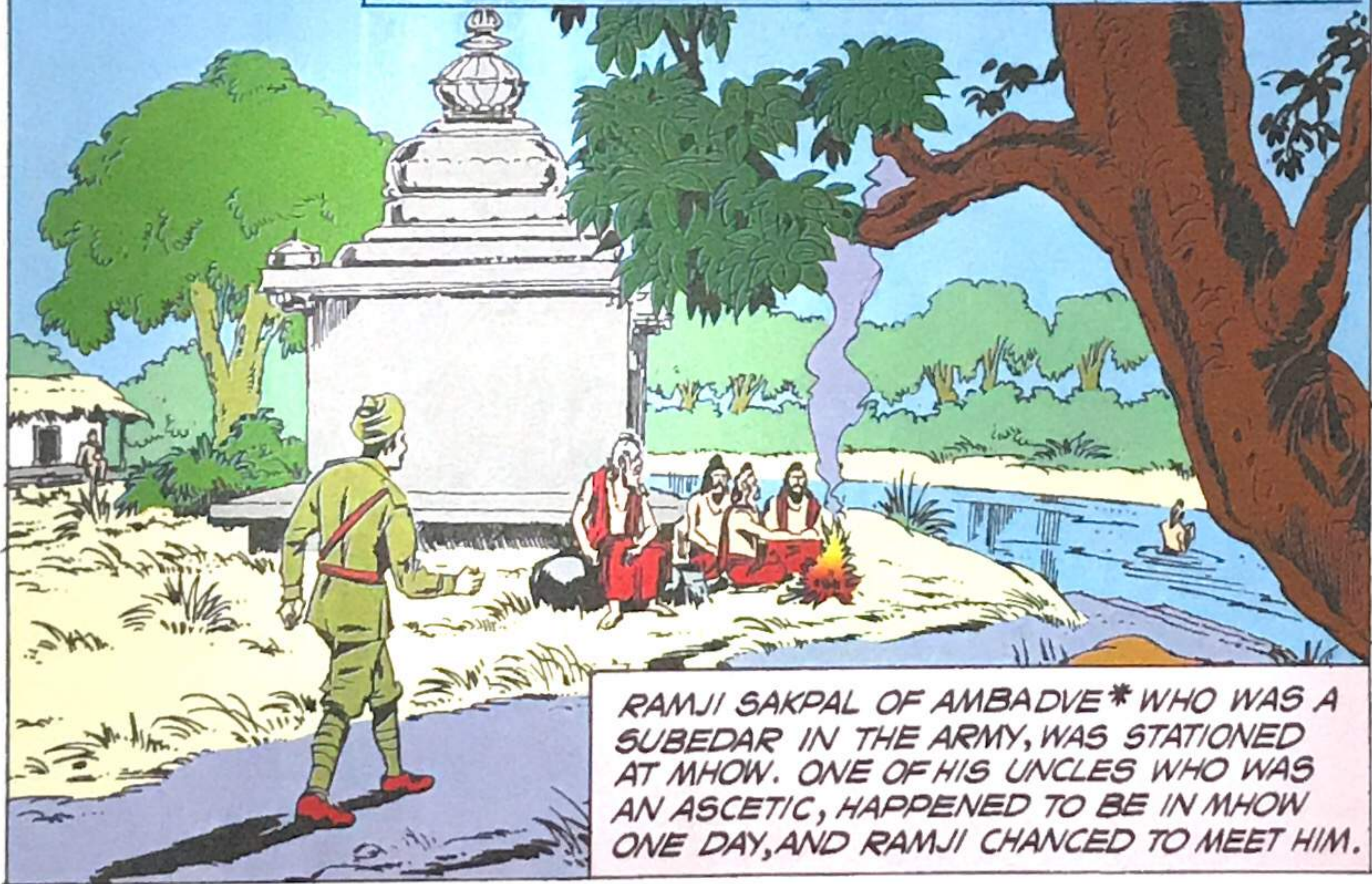


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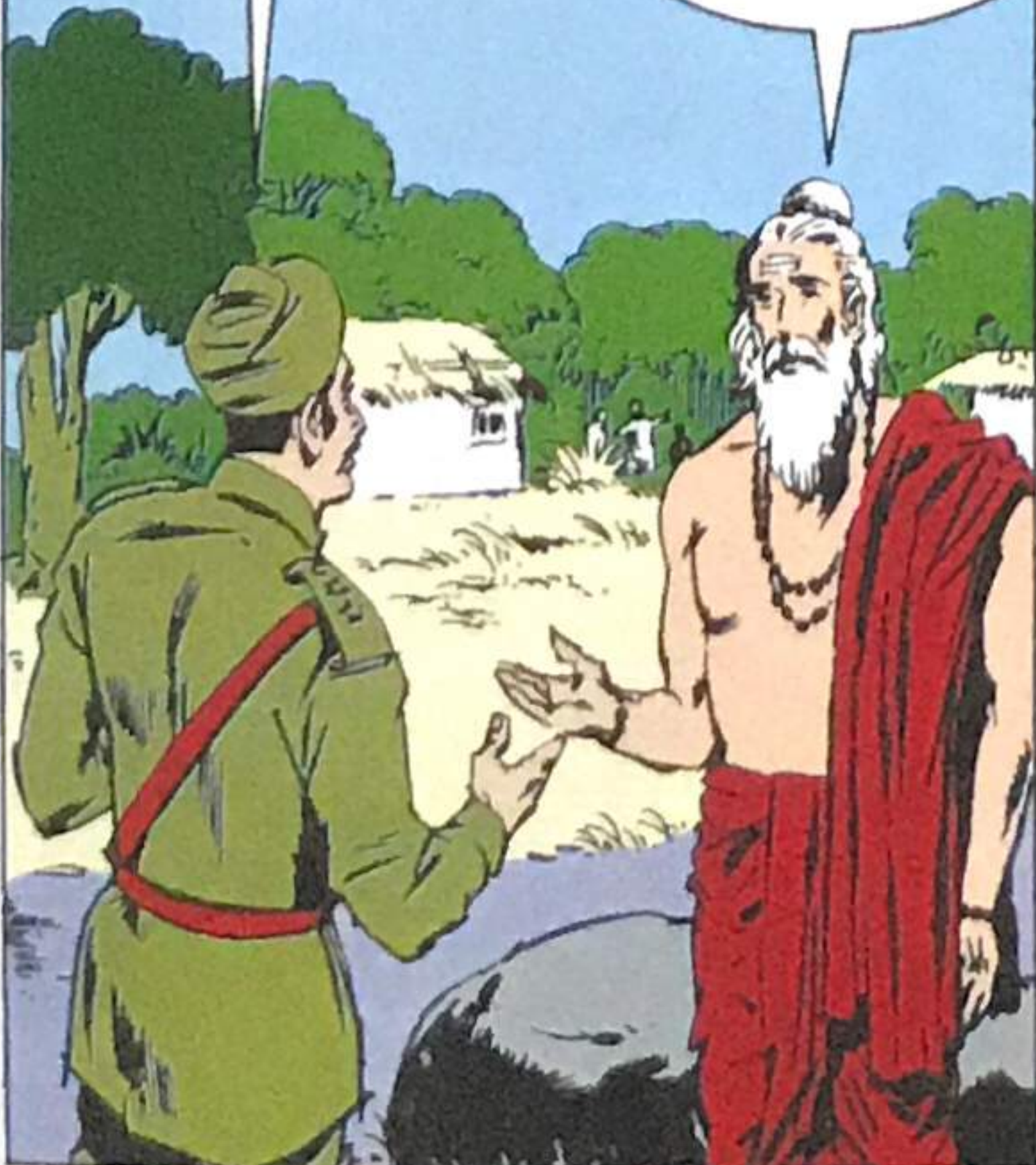
BABASAHEB AMBEDKAR



RAMJI SAKPAL OF AMBADVE* WHO WAS A SUBEDAR IN THE ARMY, WAS STATIONED AT MHOW. ONE OF HIS UNCLES WHO WAS AN ASCETIC, HAPPENED TO BE IN MHOW ONE DAY, AND RAMJI CHANCED TO MEET HIM.

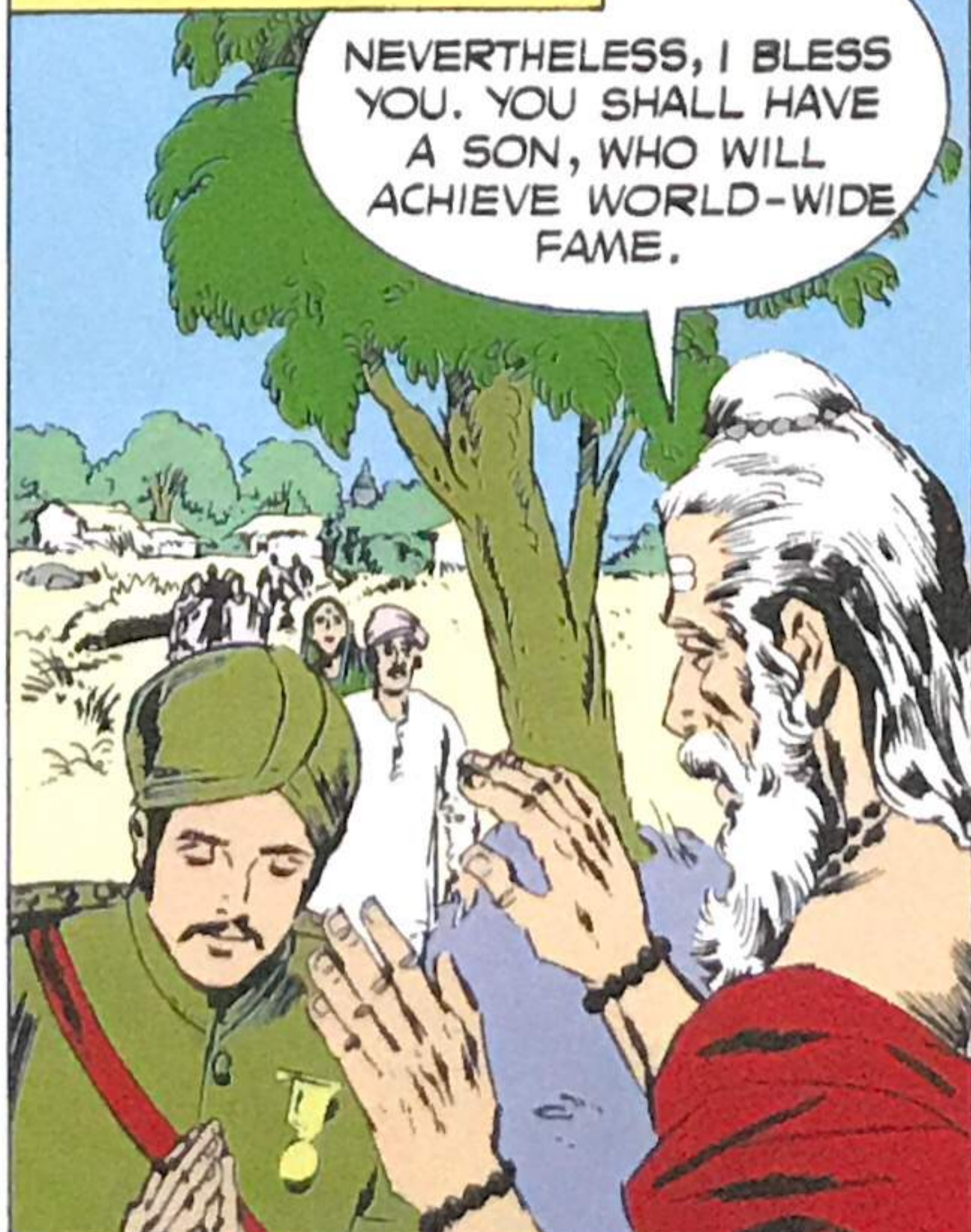
DO US THE HONOUR OF VISITING OUR HOME, UNCLE.

I HAVE RENOUNCED THE WORLD. I CANNOT COME.



THE SANYASI WAS TOUCHED BY RAMJI'S DISAPPOINTED FACE.

NEVERTHELESS, I BLESS YOU. YOU SHALL HAVE A SON, WHO WILL ACHIEVE WORLD-WIDE FAME.



* IN RATNAGIRI DISTRICT.

ON APRIL 14, 1891, RAMJI'S WIFE, BHIMABAI, GAVE BIRTH TO A SON.

LET'S CALL HIM BHIM—
A NAME BEFITTING ONE
DESTINED TO BE GREAT.
WE WILL GIVE HIM
EVERYTHING HE NEEDS,
EVEN IF WE HAVE TO
STARVE.

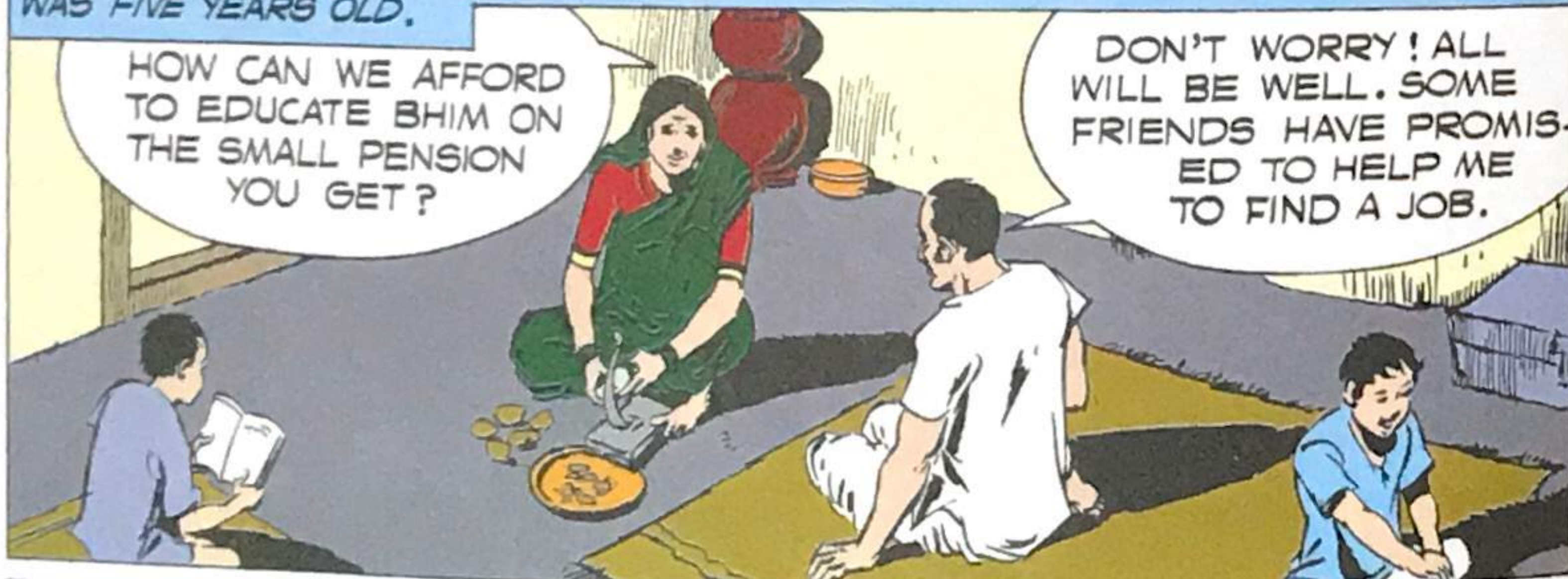
I AM A SUBEDAR-MAJOR
NOW. WE DON'T HAVE
TO STARVE TO GIVE HIM
A GOOD EDUCATION.



TWO YEARS LATER, RAMJI RETIRED FROM THE ARMY AND MOVED WITH HIS FAMILY TO DAPOLI IN THE KONKAN. BHIM WAS ENROLLED IN SCHOOL WHEN HE WAS FIVE YEARS OLD.

HOW CAN WE AFFORD
TO EDUCATE BHIM ON
THE SMALL PENSION
YOU GET?

DON'T WORRY! ALL
WILL BE WELL. SOME
FRIENDS HAVE PROMIS-
ED TO HELP ME
TO FIND A JOB.



RAMJI SOON GOT A JOB IN SATARA AND THEIR HOPES ROSE AGAIN. BUT TRAGEDY STRUCK THE FAMILY. BHIMABAI, WHO HAD BEEN AILING, DIED.

WHO WILL LOOK
AFTER MY MOTHER-
LESS CHILDREN?

BROTHER, DO NOT WORRY.
I WILL LOOK AFTER THEM,
AND LITTLE BHIM
SHALL HAVE MY
SPECIAL ATTENTION.



SO RAMJI'S SISTER, MIRA, TOOK CHARGE OF THE CHILDREN.

RAMJI, WHO WAS A TRAINED
TEACHER, LOOKED AFTER THE EDUCA-
TION OF HIS SONS.



HE ALSO READ STORIES FROM THE
MAHABHARATA AND RAMAYANA AND SANG
DEVOTIONAL SONGS TO HIS FAMILY.



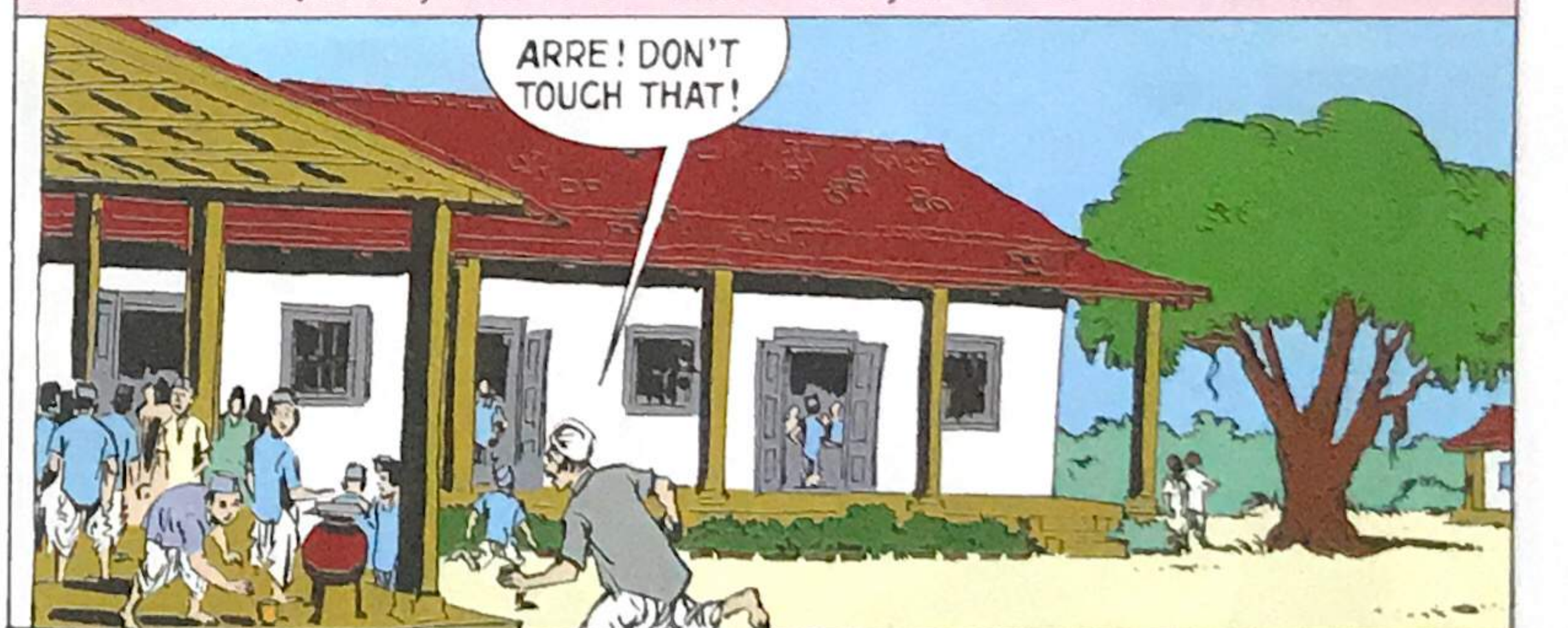
WHEN BHIM COMPLETED HIS PRIMARY EDUCATION, HE WAS ADMITTED TO HIGH SCHOOL. HE WAS MADE TO SIT IN A CORNER OF THE CLASS, SEGREGATED FROM THE OTHER STUDENTS.



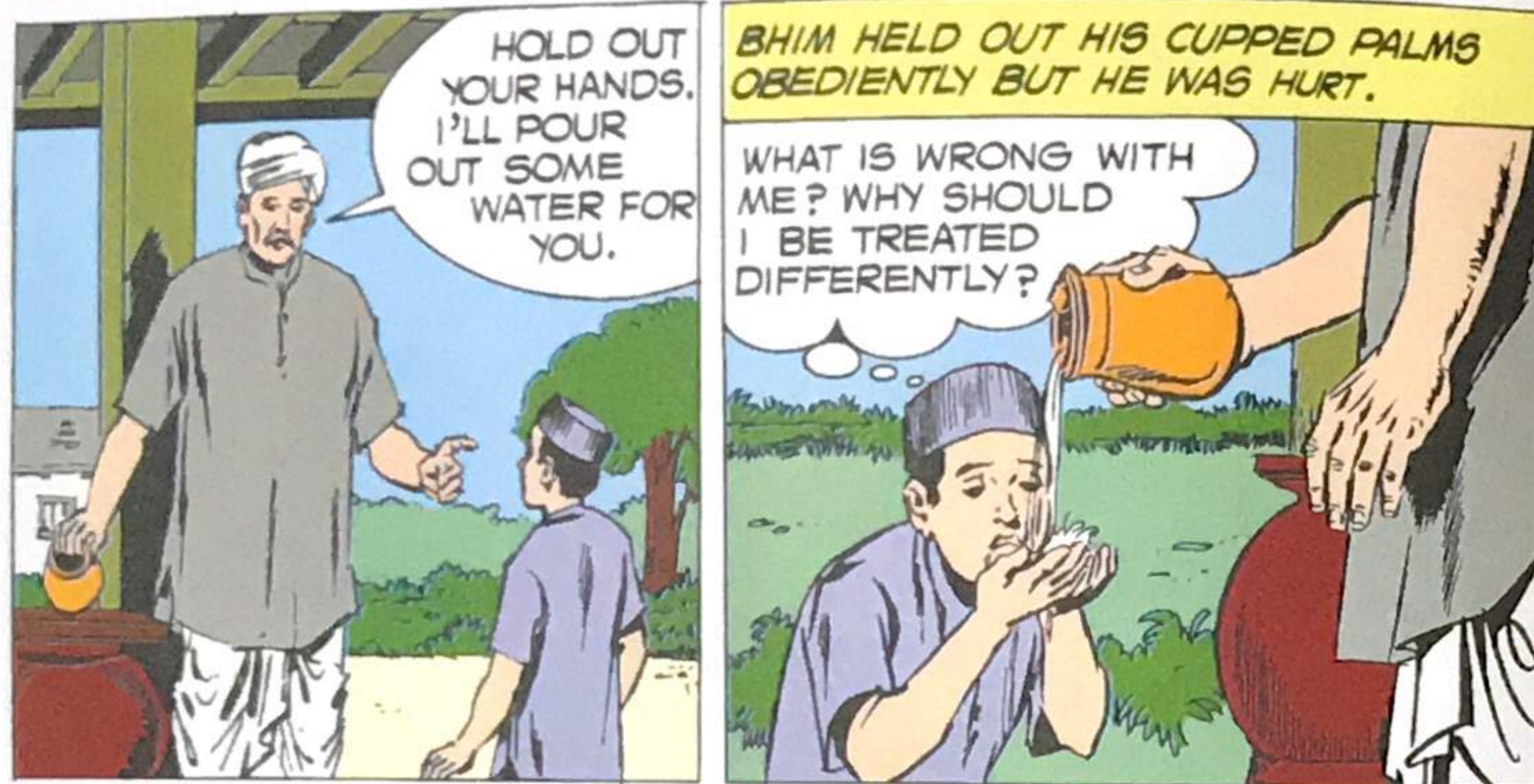
BHIMRAO
AMBADVEKAR!

PRESENT,
SIR.

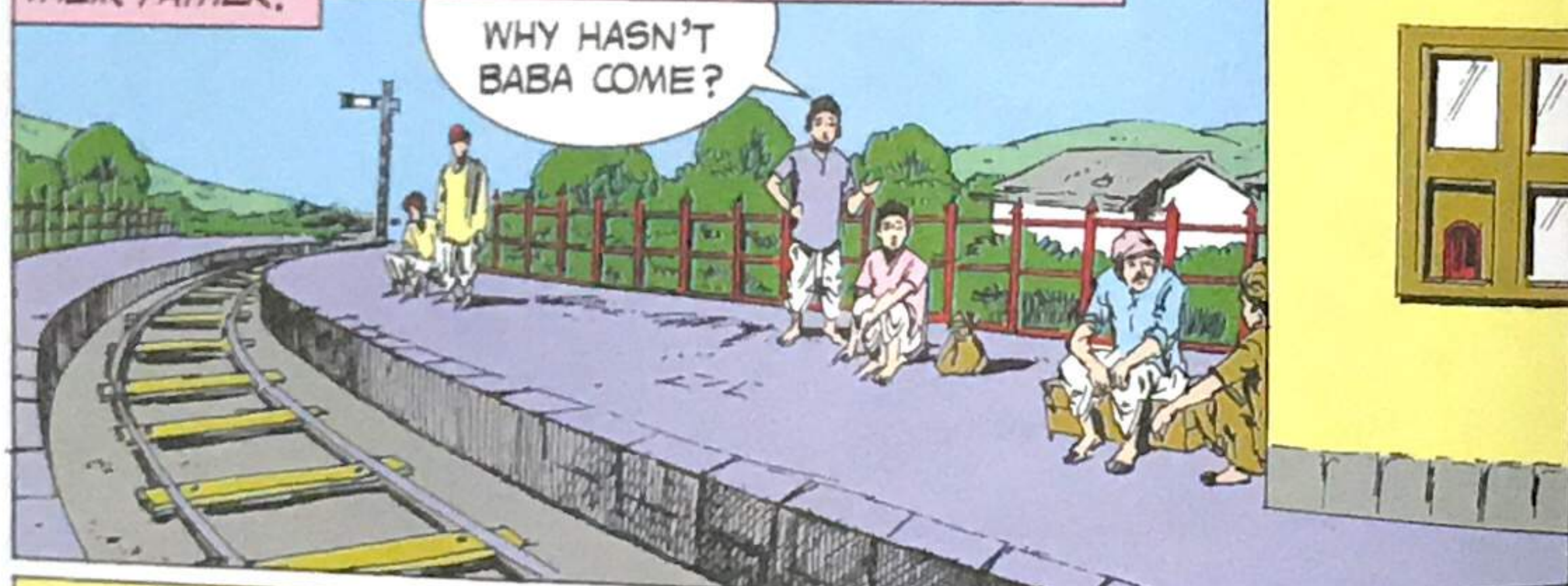
WHEN THE RECESS BELL RANG, ALL THE BOYS RAN OUT TO PLAY AND TO DRINK WATER. BHIM, WHO WAS THIRSTY TOO, REACHED FOR THE CUP —



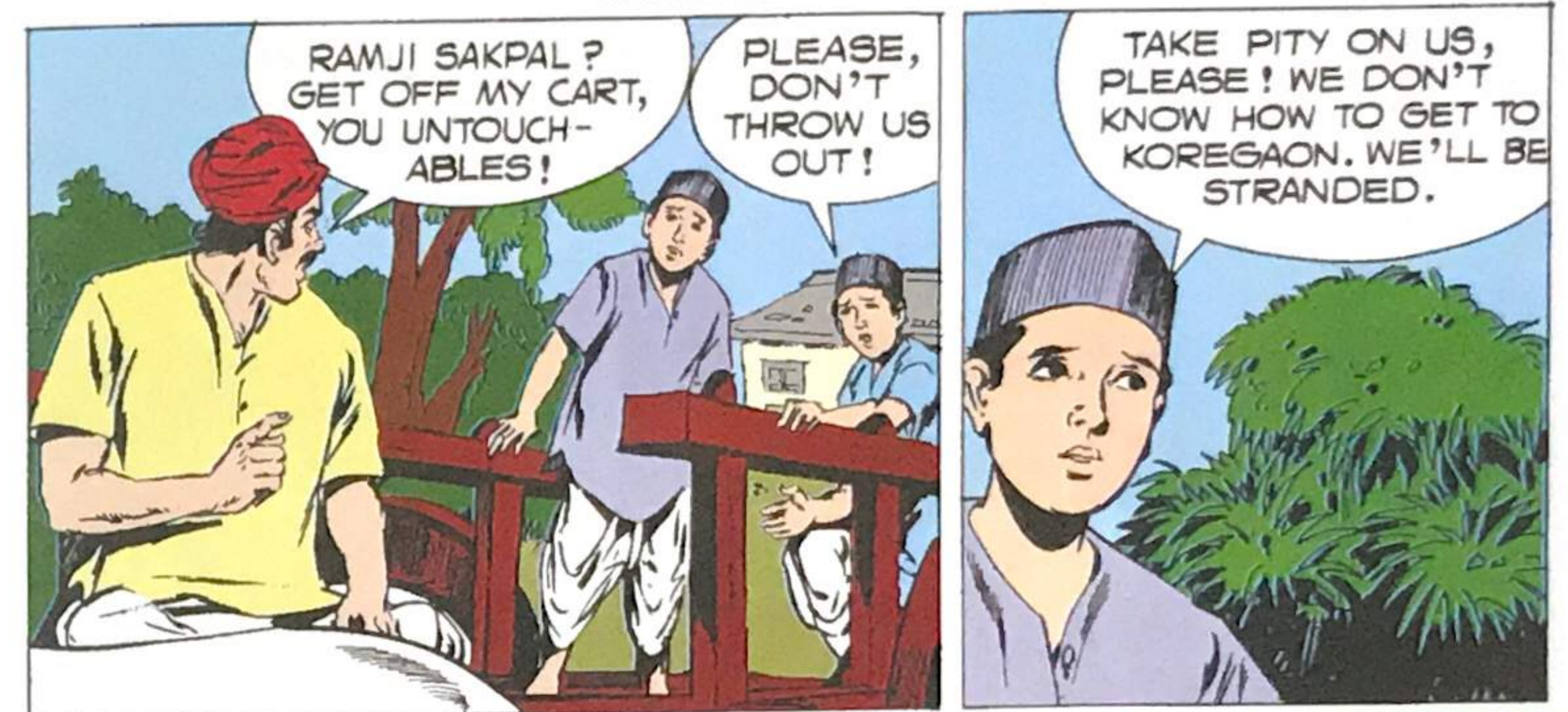
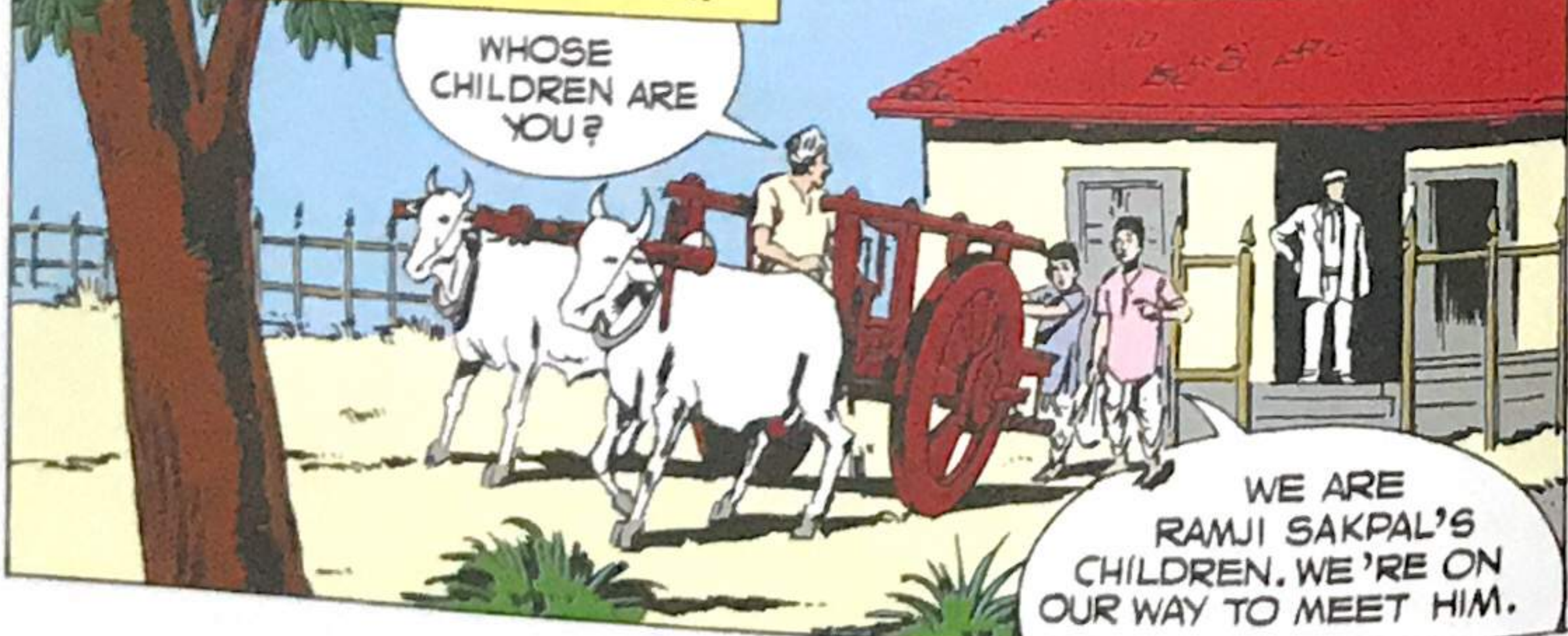
ARRE! DON'T
TOUCH THAT!



ONCE BHIM AND HIS ELDER BROTHER HAD TO TRAVEL TO KOREGAON, WHERE RAMJI WORKED AS A CASHIER. THEY GOT DOWN AT MASUR STATION AND WAITED FOR THEIR FATHER.



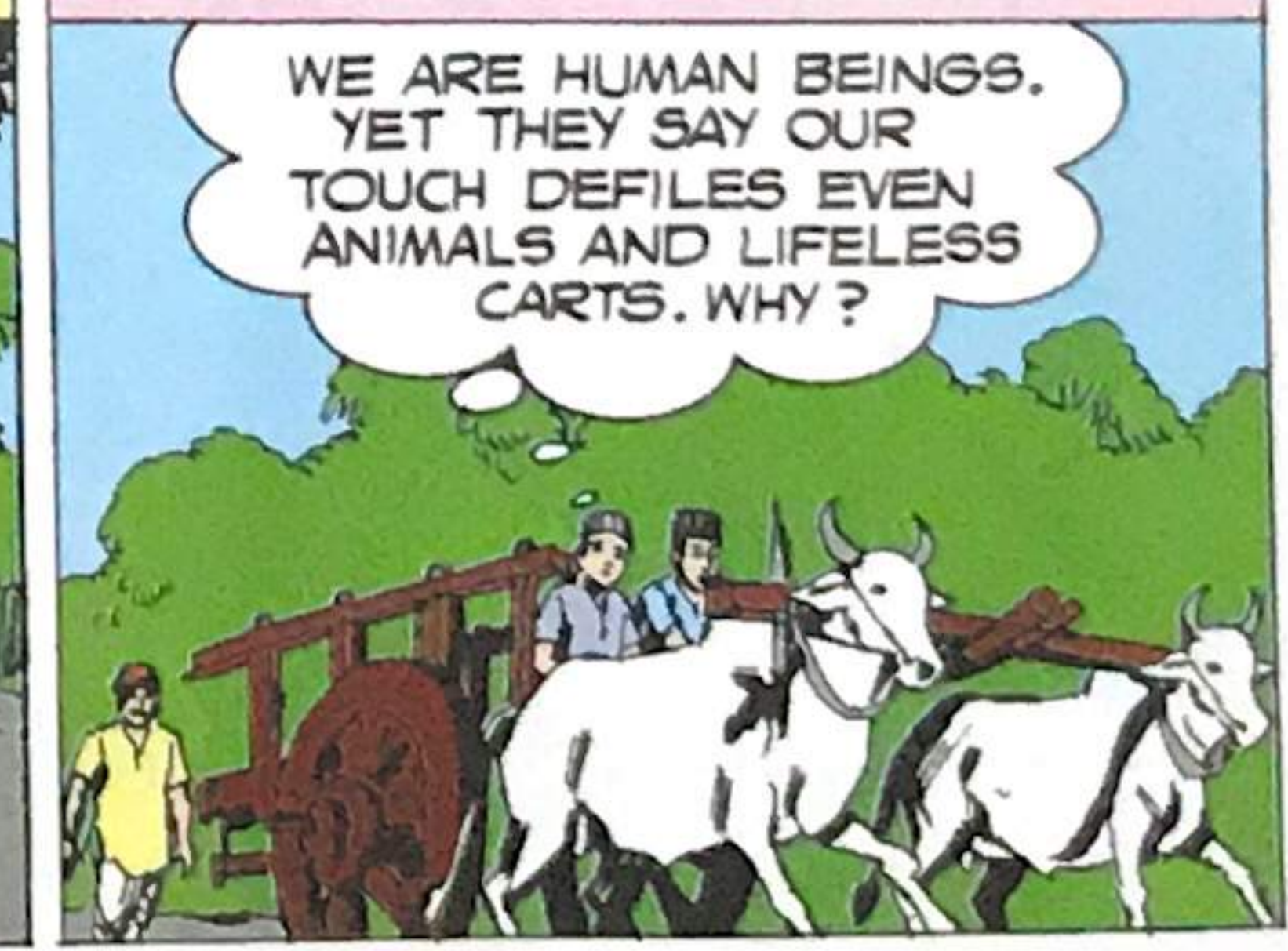
AFTER WAITING FOR A LONG TIME, THEY HIRED A BULLOCK-CART WITH THE HELP OF THE STATION MASTER.



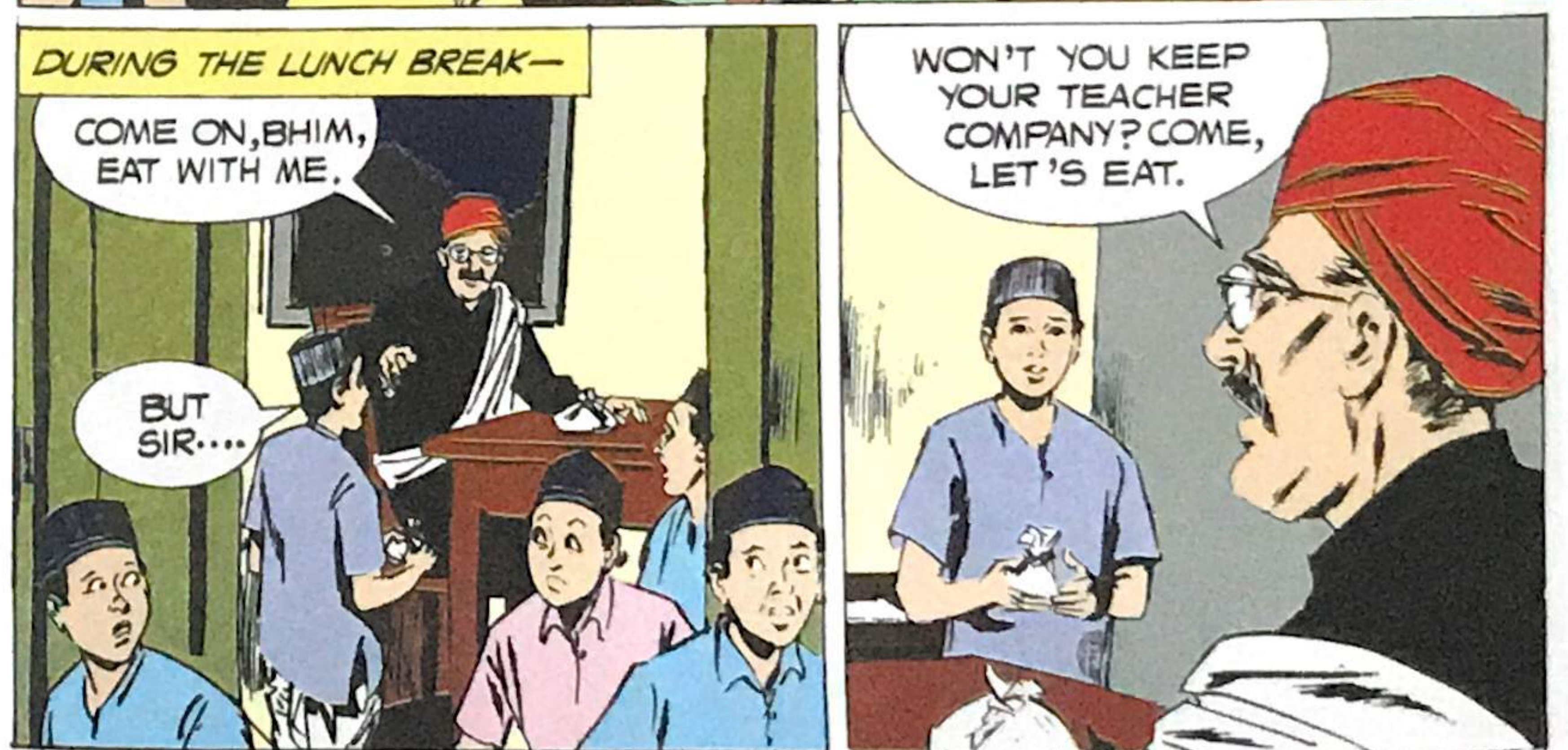
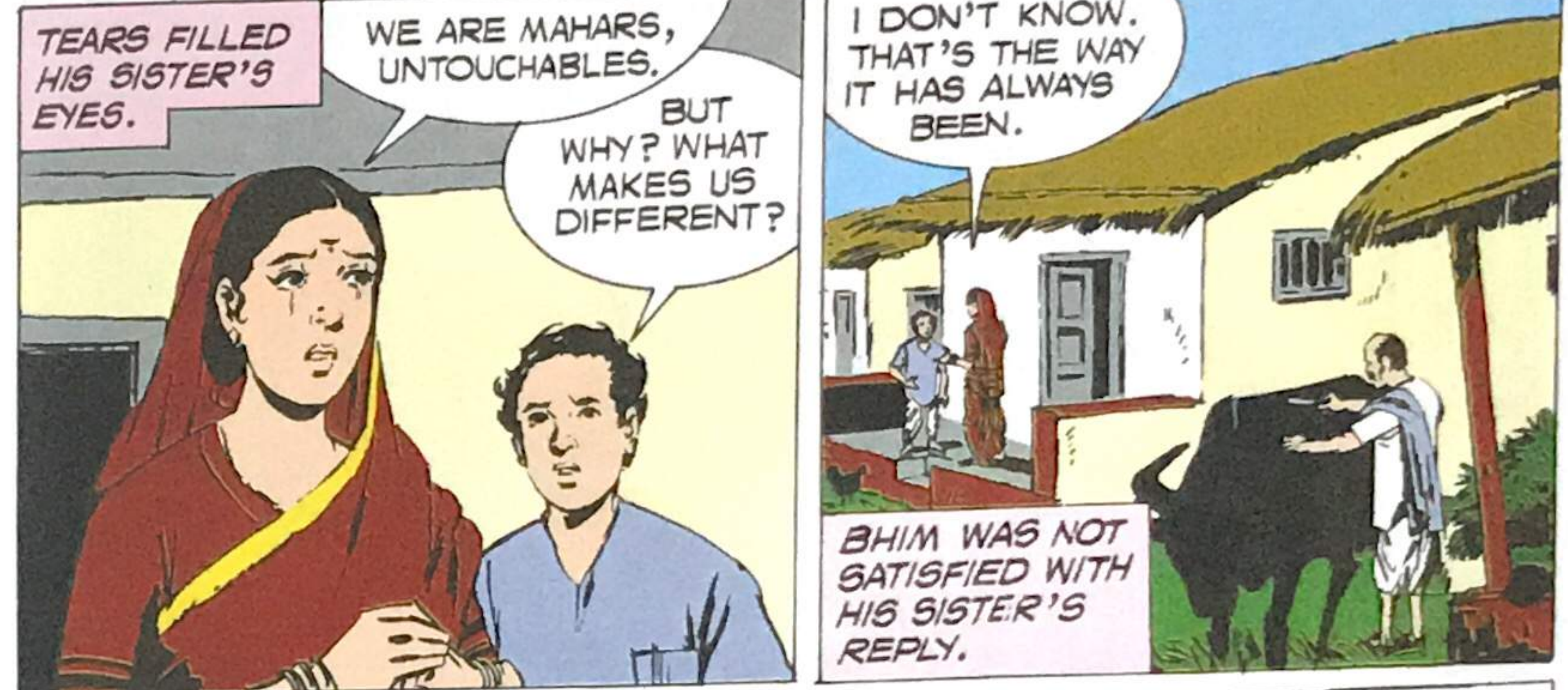
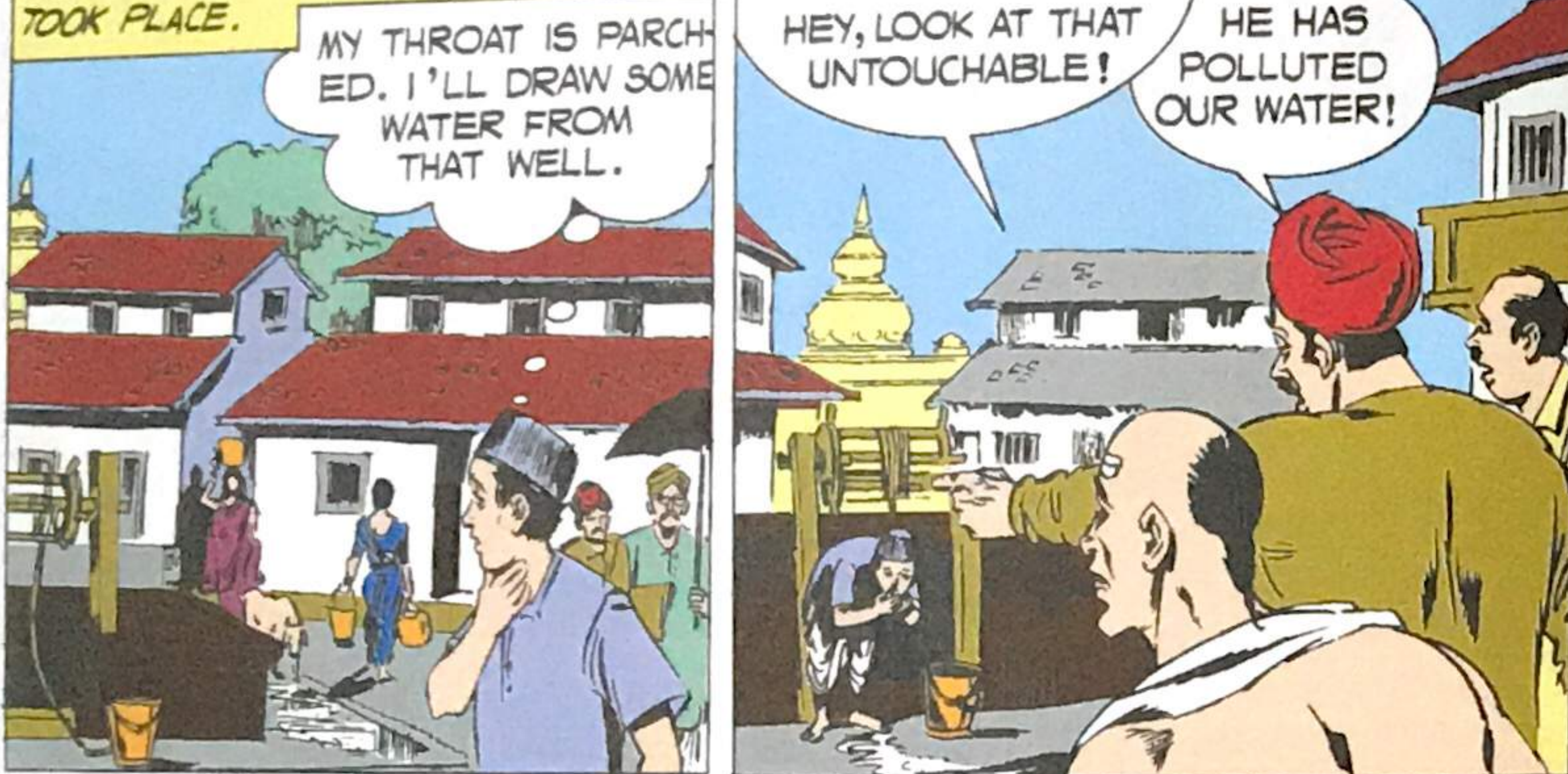
THE CARTMAN'S GREED GOT THE BETTER OF HIS HORROR OF POLLUTION.



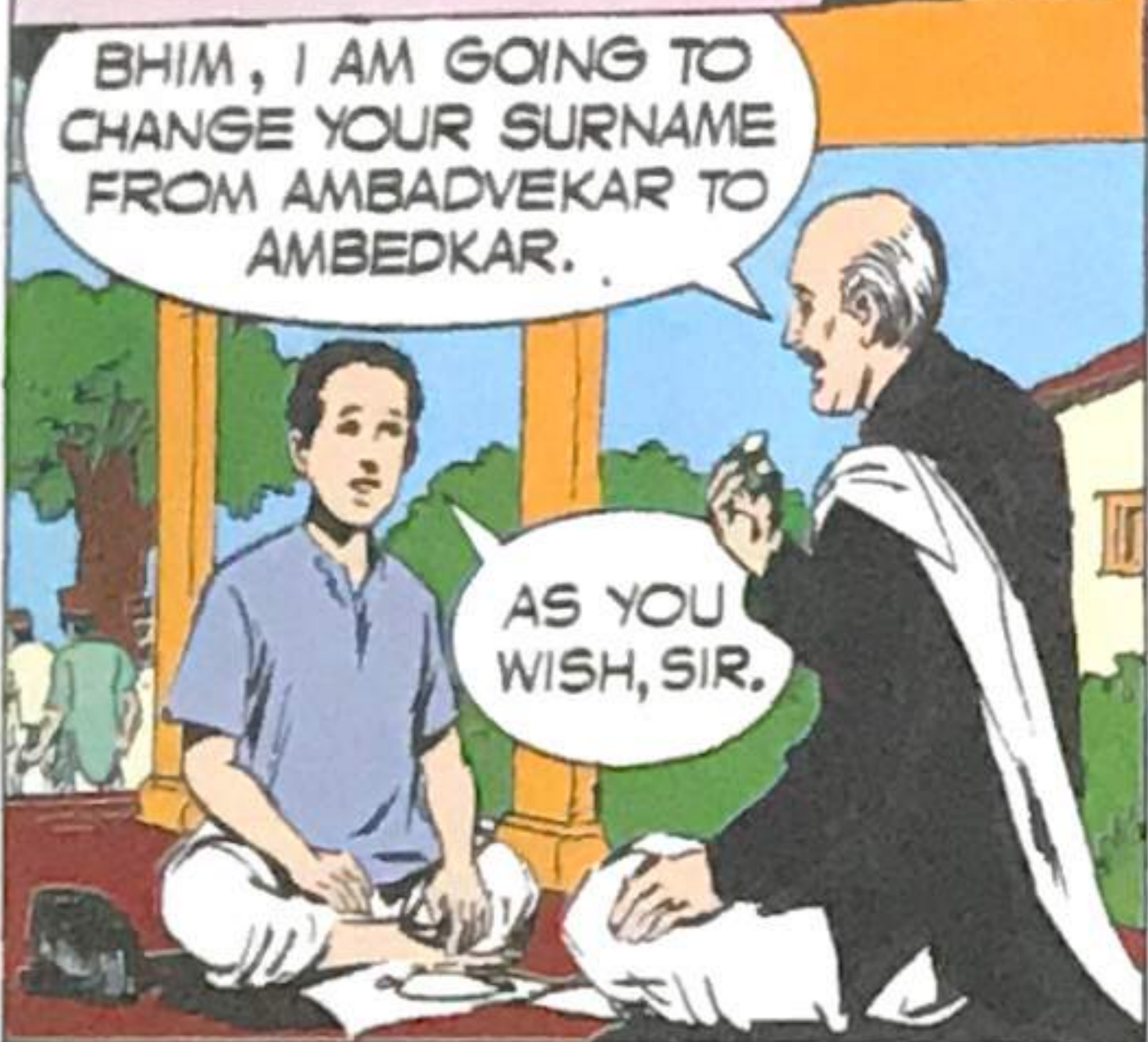
ALL THROUGH THE JOURNEY, BHIM BROODED OVER THE INCIDENT.



LITTLE BHIM MIGHT HAVE FORGOTTEN THE INCIDENT, BUT A FEW DAYS AFTER HE RETURNED TO SATARA, ON HIS WAY FROM SCHOOL ANOTHER SIMILAR INCIDENT TOOK PLACE.



ONCE WHILE THE TWO OF THEM WERE HAVING LUNCH TOGETHER —



BHIM, I AM GOING TO CHANGE YOUR SURNAME FROM AMBADVEKAR TO AMBEDKAR.

AS YOU WISH, SIR.

ONE NIGHT, MIRA CALLED THE THREE BOYS TO HER.

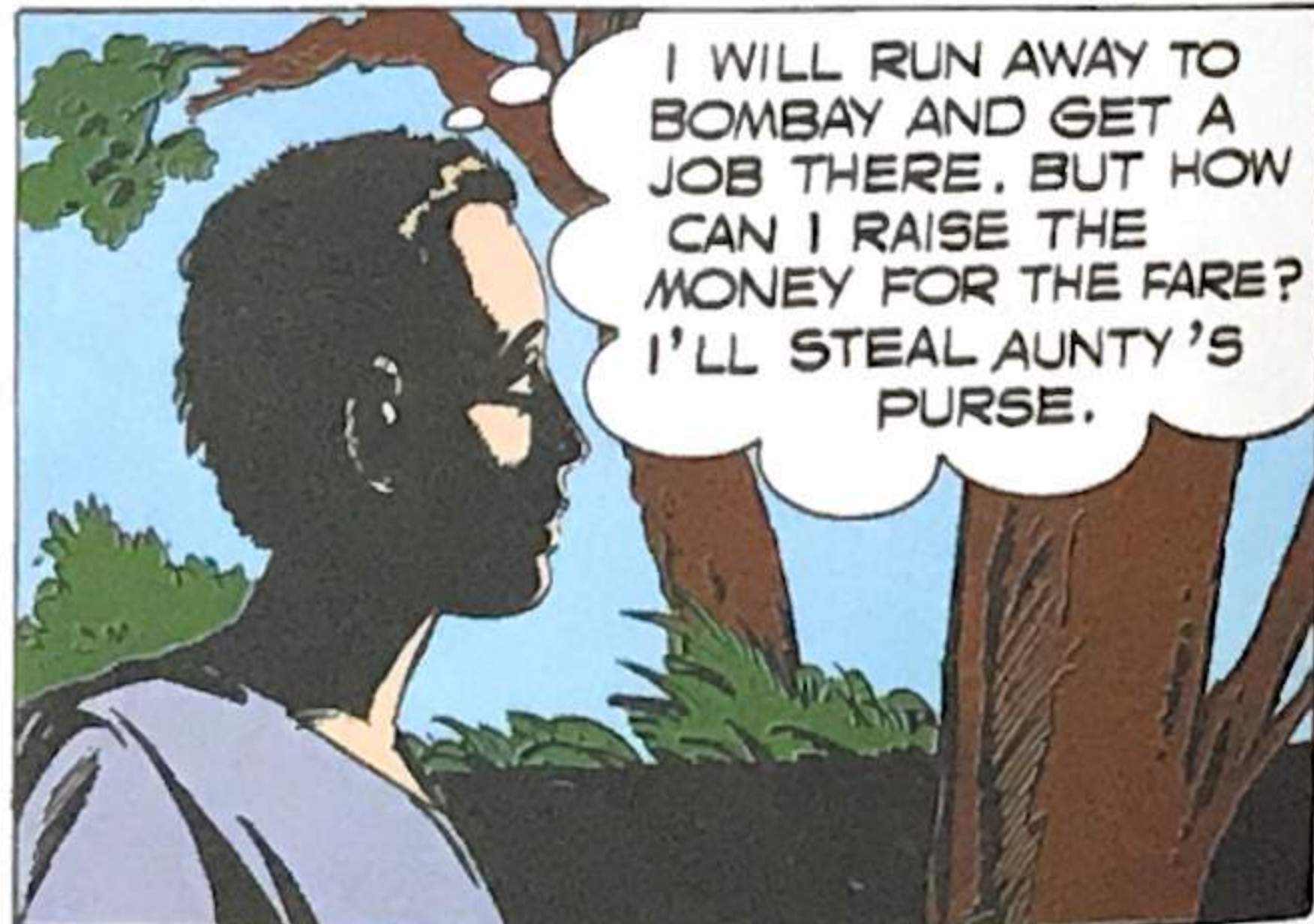
CHILDREN, YOU WILL HAVE A NEW MOTHER SOON, YOUR FATHER HAS DECIDED TO MARRY AGAIN.



OH, NO!



SHE WILL WEAR MY MOTHER'S ORNAMENTS AND RUN HER KITCHEN. NO! NEVER! I CAN'T STAY HERE.



I WILL RUN AWAY TO BOMBAY AND GET A JOB THERE. BUT HOW CAN I RAISE THE MONEY FOR THE FARE? I'LL STEAL AUNTY'S PURSE.

THREE NIGHTS HE TRIED WITHOUT SUCCESS. ON THE FOURTH NIGHT—



AH! I'VE GOT IT AT LAST!

HE EAGERLY OPENED THE PURSE —



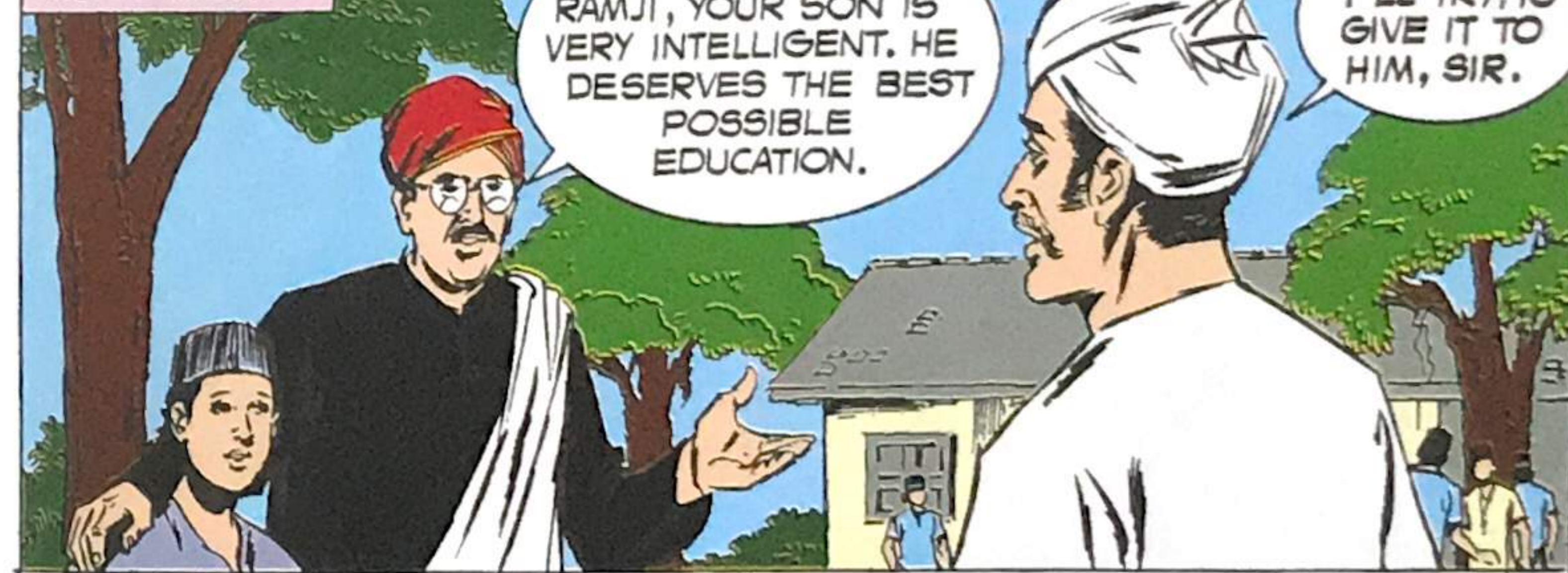
WHAT! ONLY ONE SMALL COIN! MY POOR AUNT! AND I WAS GOING TO ROB HER OF THIS!

BHIM PUT THE PURSE WITH THE MONEY BACK, AND WENT TO BED.



GOD! FORGIVE ME FOR MY SIN. I SHALL MEND MY WAYS. I'LL STUDY HARD AND MAKE HER HAPPY WHEN I GROW UP.

BHIM PUT HIS HEART AND SOUL INTO HIS STUDIES AND WON THE ADMIRATION OF HIS TEACHERS.



RAMJI, YOUR SON IS VERY INTELLIGENT. HE DESERVES THE BEST POSSIBLE EDUCATION.

I'LL TRY TO GIVE IT TO HIM, SIR.

RAMJI MOVED WITH HIS CHILDREN TO BOMBAY. HE TOOK UP A ROOM IN A CHAWL IN THE MILL AREA AT PAREL. THE ROOM SERVED AS KITCHEN, BEDROOM AND STUDY.



BHIM, YOU CAN'T STUDY IN ALL THIS NOISE. GO TO BED NOW. I'LL WAKE YOU UP AT TWO IN THE MORNING.

ALL RIGHT, FATHER.

AND BHIM SLEPT ON THE FLOOR.

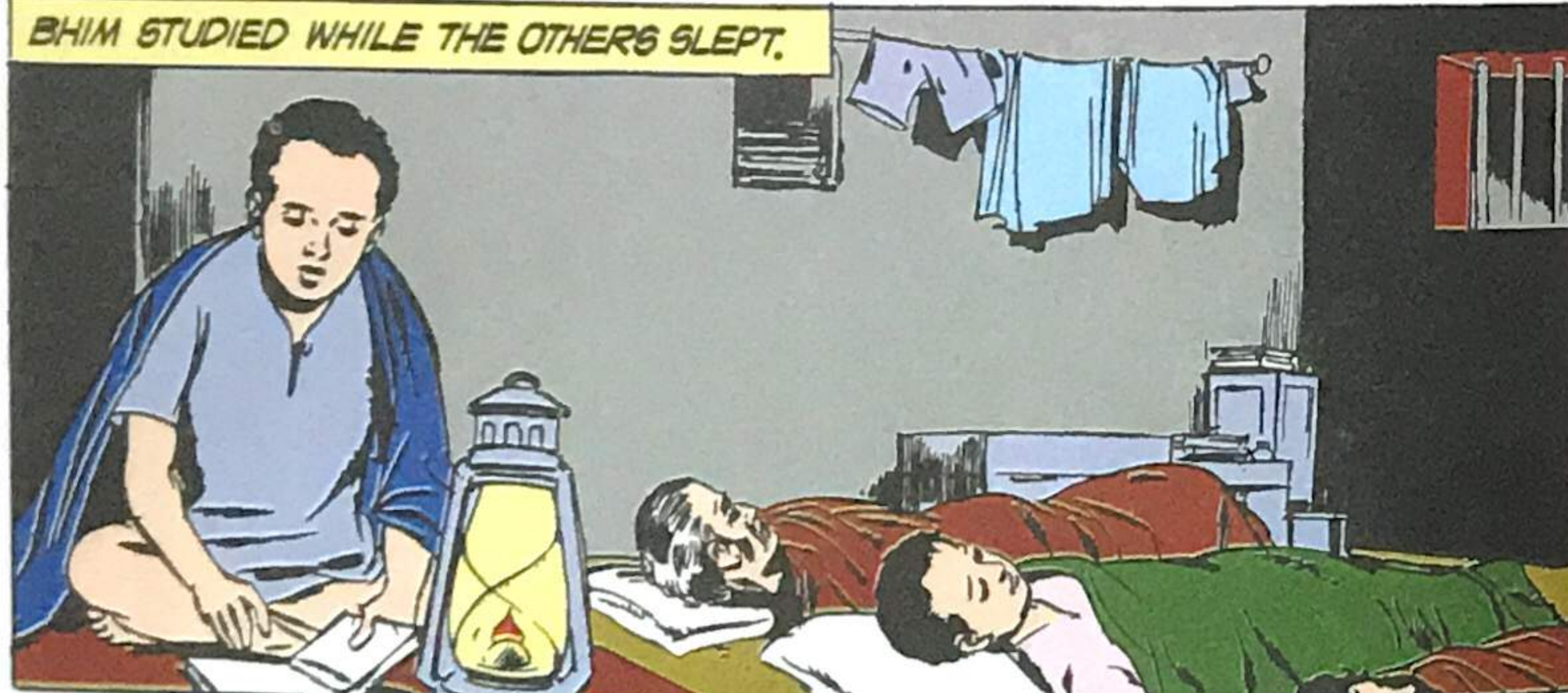


AT TWO IN THE MORNING —

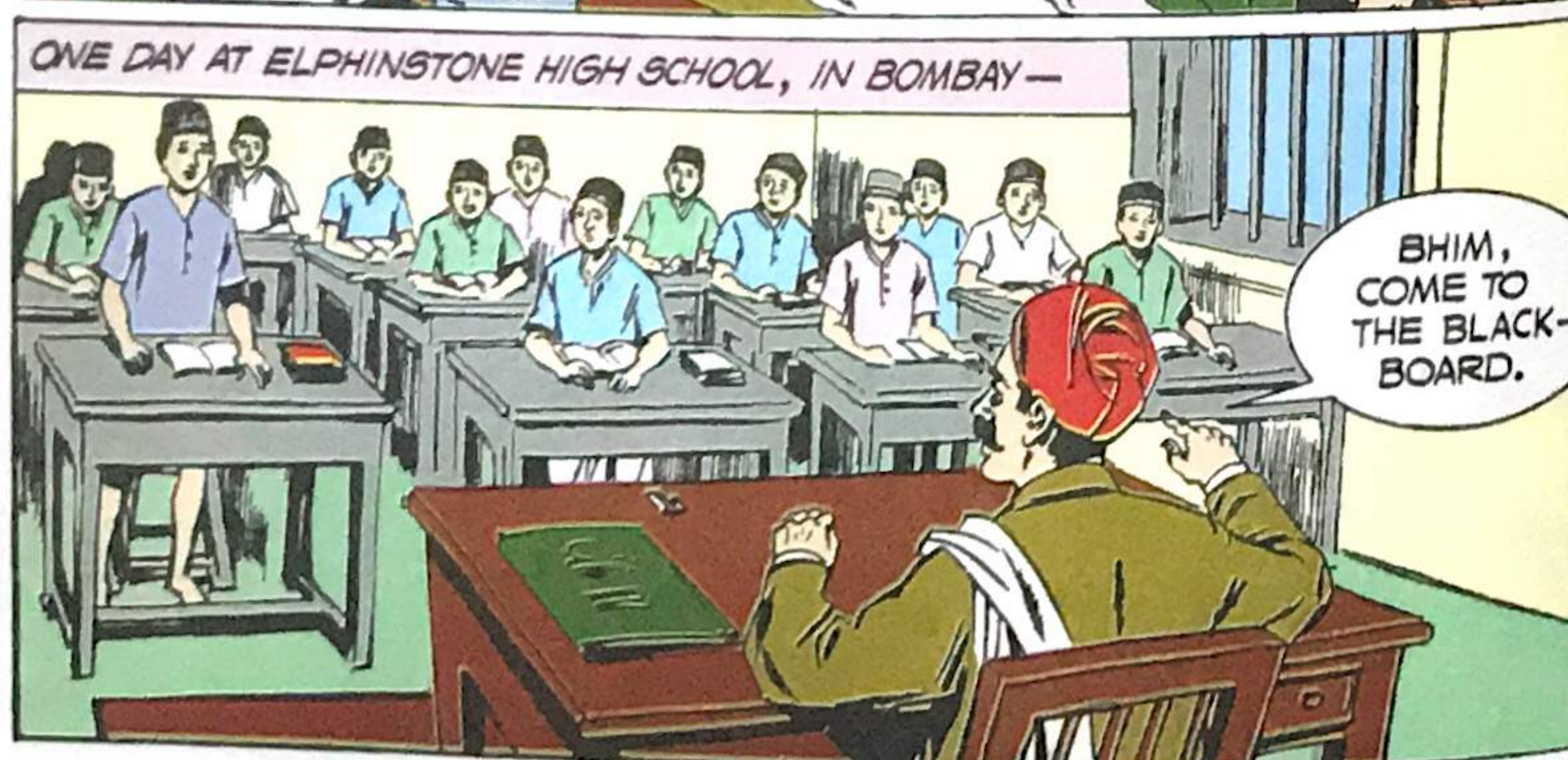


BHIM, IT'S TIME TO GET UP.

BHIM STUDIED WHILE THE OTHERS SLEPT.



ONE DAY AT ELPHINSTONE HIGH SCHOOL, IN BOMBAY —



BHIM, COME TO THE BLACK-BOARD.

CASTEISM WAS PREVALENT EVEN IN THE LARGE METROPOLIS.



SIR! STOP HIM! HE IS AN UNTOUCHABLE!

OH, WE ARE DOOMED!

OUR LUNCH BOXES ARE BEHIND THE BOARD. HE WILL POLLUTE THEM!

AGAIN —



SIR! I'D LIKE TO TAKE SANSKRIT AS MY SECOND LANGUAGE.

YOU CAN'T. SANSKRIT IS NOT FOR UNTOUCHABLES. BUT YOU MAY LEARN PERSIAN.

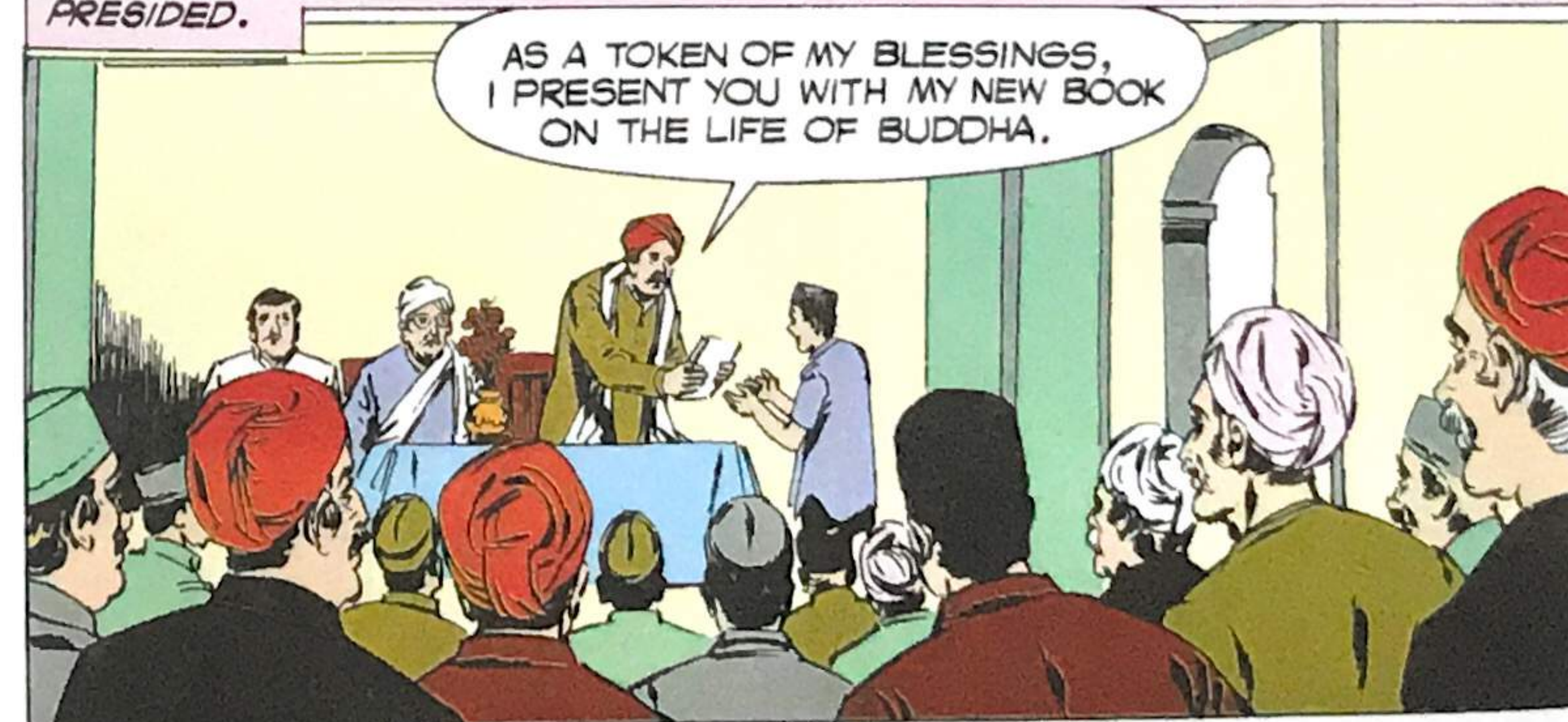
IN SPITE OF ALL THESE INSULTS, BHIM APPLIED HIMSELF SERIOUSLY TO HIS STUDIES. HE USED TO GO TO THE CHARNI ROAD GARDENS TO STUDY. THERE HE OFTEN MET K.A. KELUSKAR, A SCHOLAR AND SOCIAL REFORMER.

HOW ARE YOUR STUDIES GOING, BHIMRAO? *

I AM STUDYING HARD, SIR.

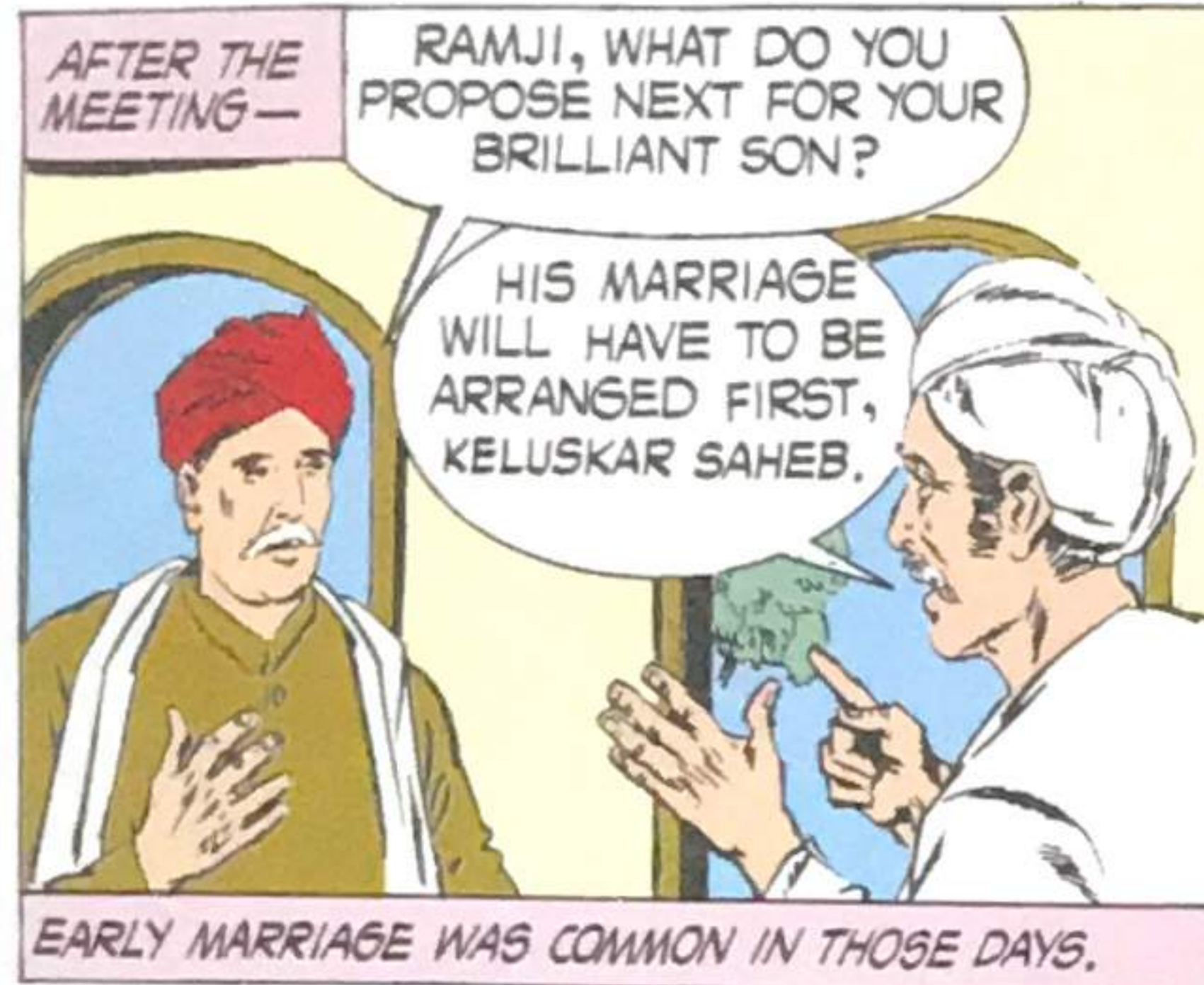


BHIM WAS THE FIRST IN HIS COMMUNITY TO PASS THE MATRICULATION EXAMINATION. HIS COMMUNITY CONVENED A MEETING TO HONOUR HIM. SHRI KELUSKAR WAS ALSO PRESENT TO FELICITATE HIM. SHRI S. K. BOLE, A WELL-KNOWN SOCIAL REFORMER, PRESIDED.

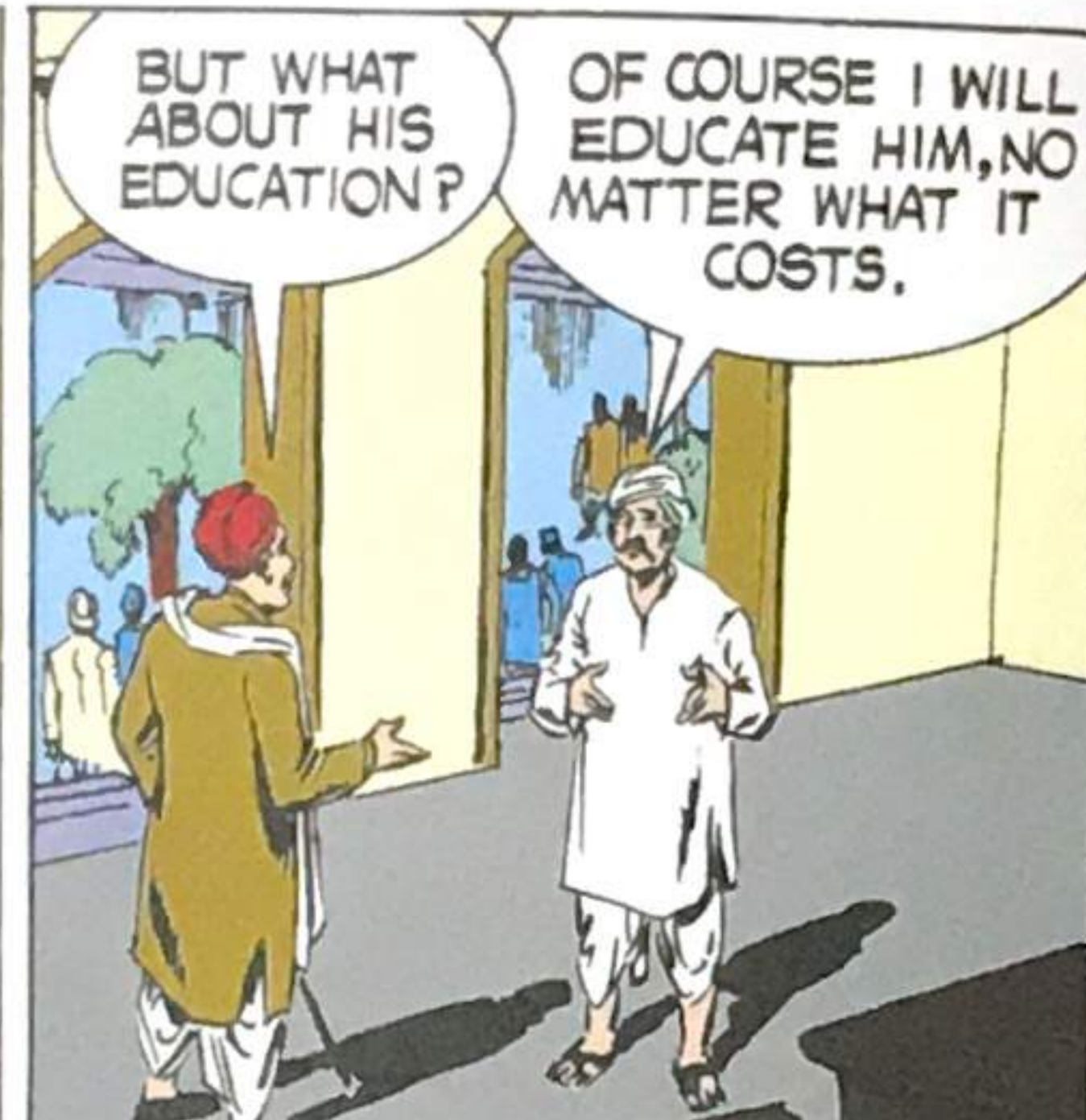


AS A TOKEN OF MY BLESSINGS, I PRESENT YOU WITH MY NEW BOOK ON THE LIFE OF BUDDHA.

* RAO IS AN HONORIFIC, USED IN MAHARASHTRA.



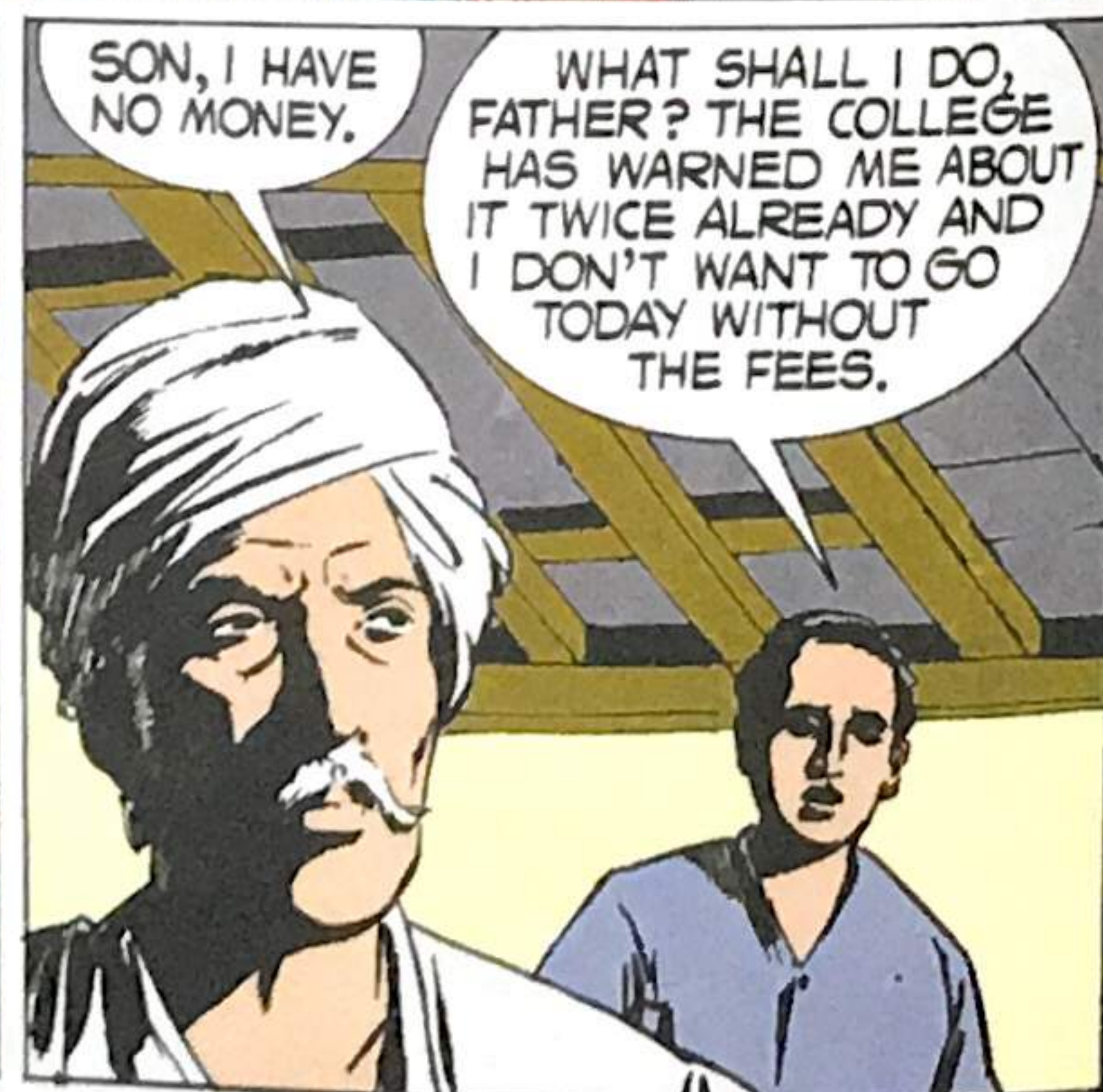
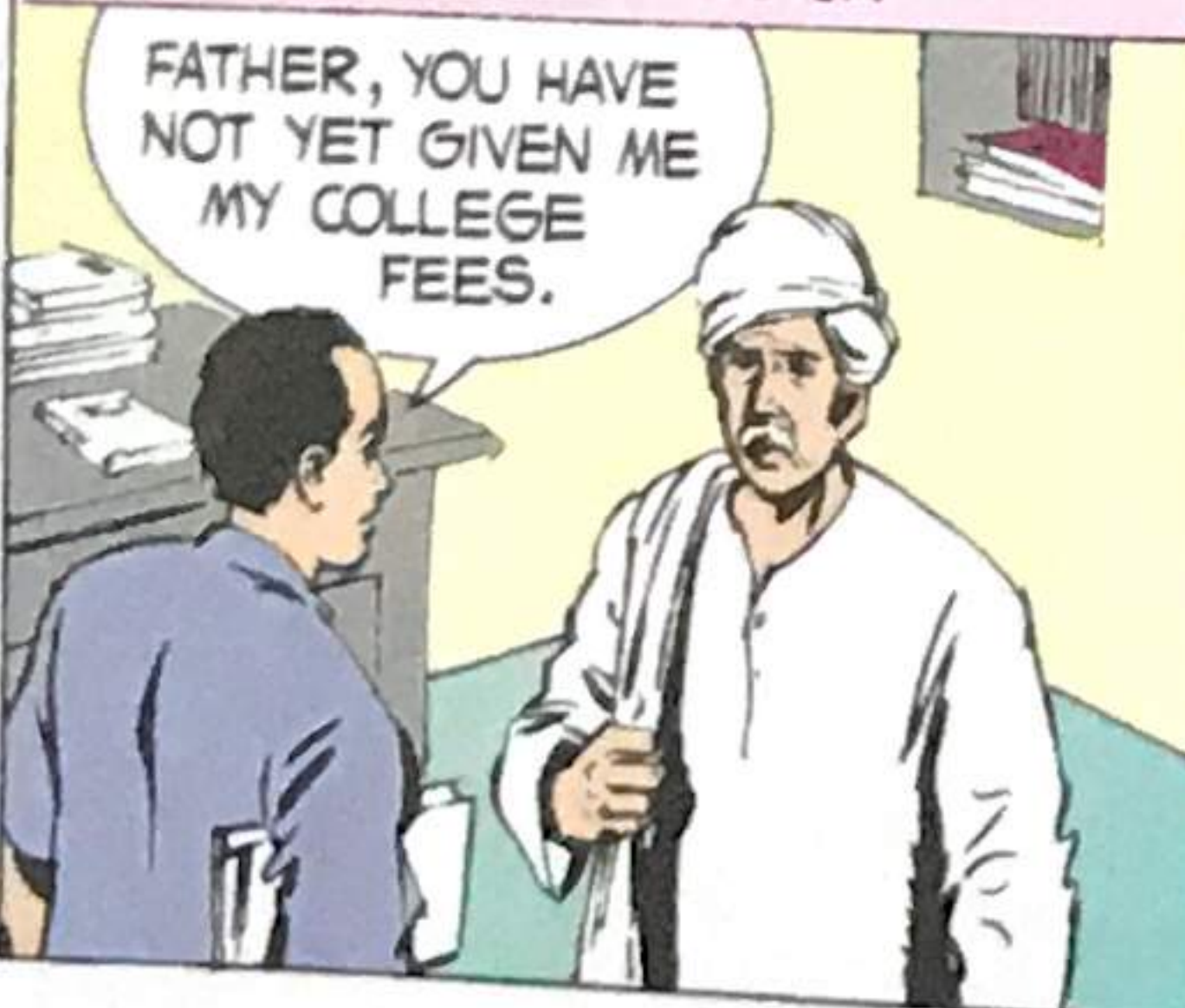
EARLY MARRIAGE WAS COMMON IN THOSE DAYS.



BHIM WAS MARRIED TO RAMABAI.



RAMJI CONTINUED TO PAY FOR HIS EDUCATION, EVEN THOUGH IT PUT A GREAT STRAIN ON HIS RESOURCES. BUT WHEN BHIM PASSED THE INTER-MEDIATE ARTS EXAMINATION—



IN THAT DESPERATE SITUATION RAMJI REMEMBERED KELUSKAR'S EARLIER KINDNESS AND APPROACHED HIM FOR HELP. HIS RESPONSE WAS IMMEDIATE.



AND SOON— FATHER, MAHARAJA GAEKWAD HAS GRANTED ME A MONTHLY SCHOLARSHIP OF TWENTY-FIVE RUPEES. YOU WON'T NEED TO WORRY ANY MORE.



BHIM PASSED HIS B.A. IN 1912.



BHIM WENT TO BARODA. BARELY FIFTEEN DAYS LATER, BAD NEWS REACHED HIM—

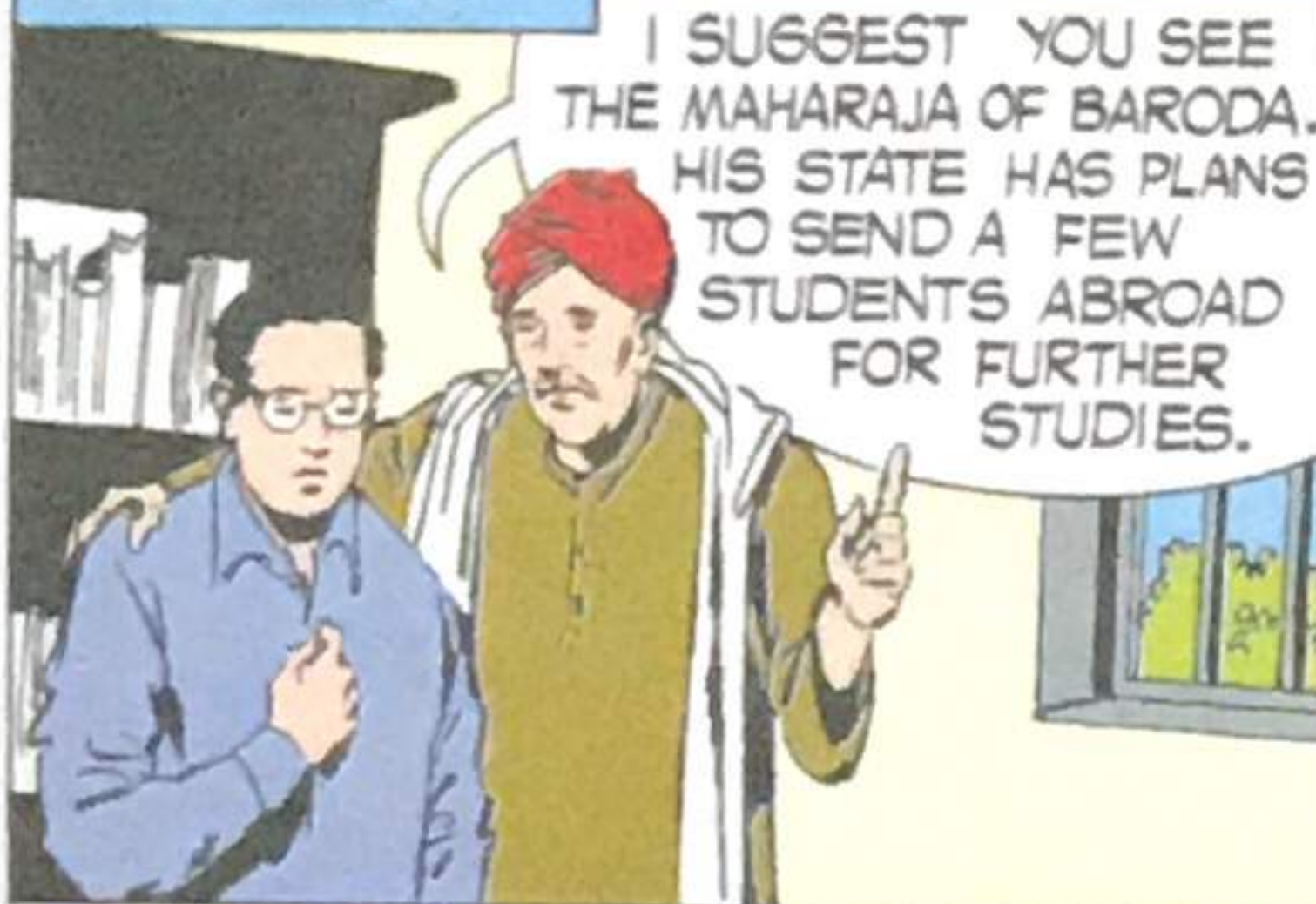


BHIM RETURNED TO BOMBAY AND WAS AT HIS FATHER'S SIDE WHEN HE DIED ON 2ND FEBRUARY, 1913.



BUT RAMJI HAD LAID THE FOUNDATION FOR HIS SON'S FUTURE ACHIEVEMENTS.

BHIMRAO WENT AGAIN TO SHRI KELUSKAR FOR GUIDANCE.



I SUGGEST YOU SEE THE MAHARAJA OF BARODA. HIS STATE HAS PLANS TO SEND A FEW STUDENTS ABROAD FOR FURTHER STUDIES.

SOON—

I HAVE JUST COME FROM BARODA. I HAVE BEEN SELECTED, BUT I HAD TO SIGN AN AGREEMENT TO SERVE BARODA STATE FOR TEN YEARS ON COMPLETION OF MY STUDIES.



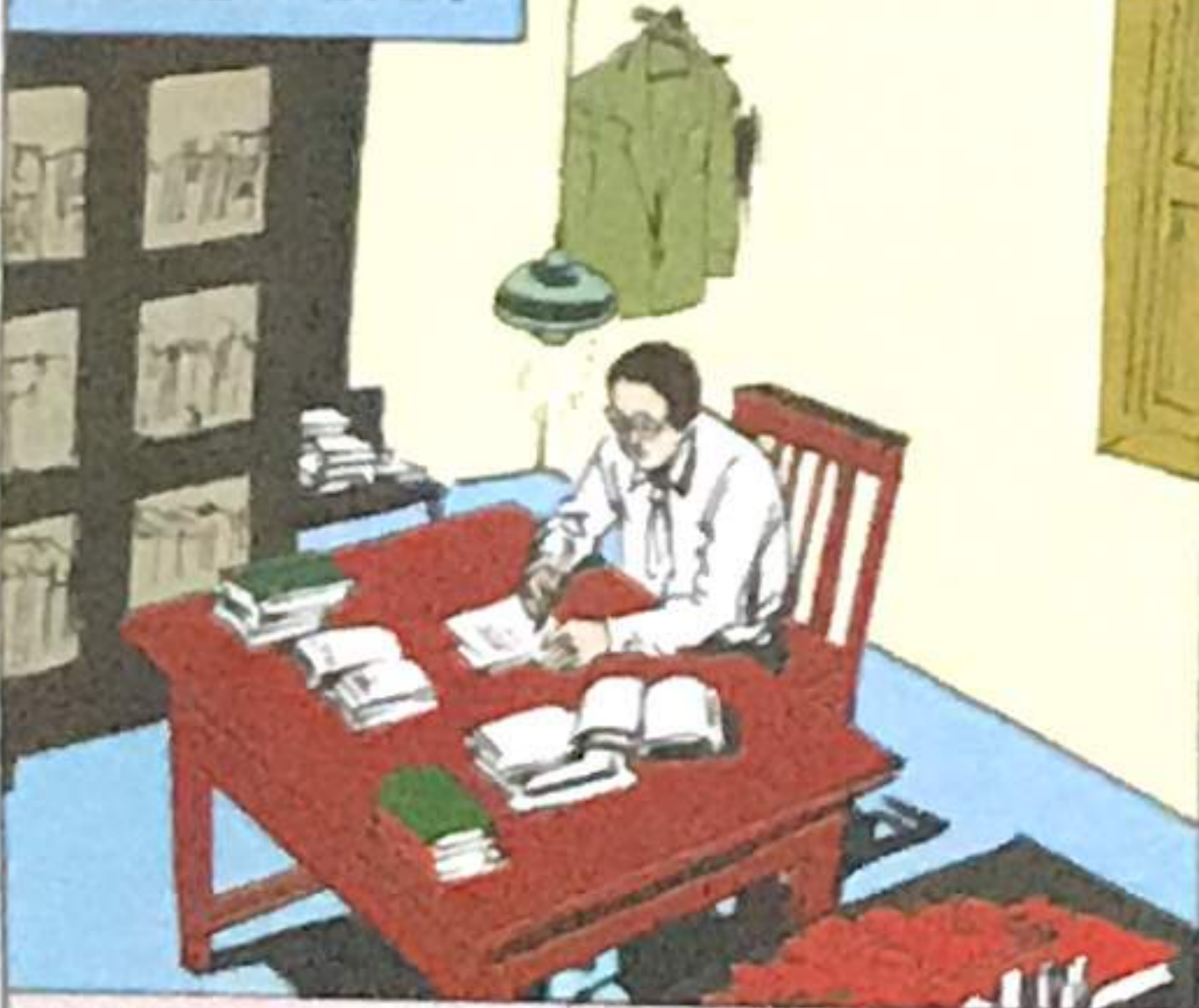
BHIMRAO ARRIVED IN NEW YORK IN JULY 1913.



I FEEL SO FREE HERE. THERE ARE NO SOCIAL RESTRAINTS ON ME. I CAN DO ALMOST ANYTHING I PLEASE.

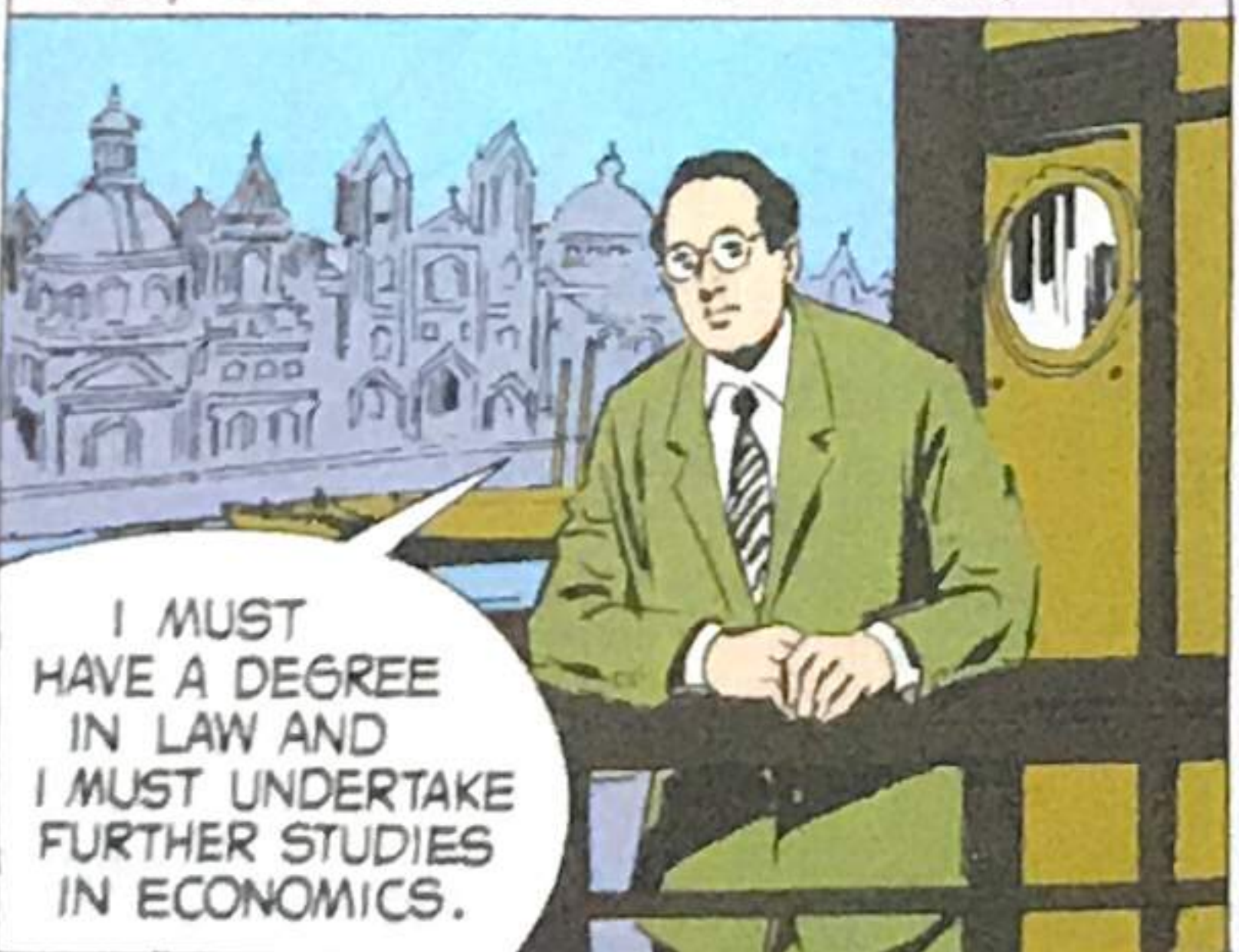
THE FREEDOM AND EQUALITY IN THE U.S.A. WAS A NOVEL EXPERIENCE FOR BHIMRAO.

HE WORKED ALMOST EIGHTEEN HOURS A DAY.



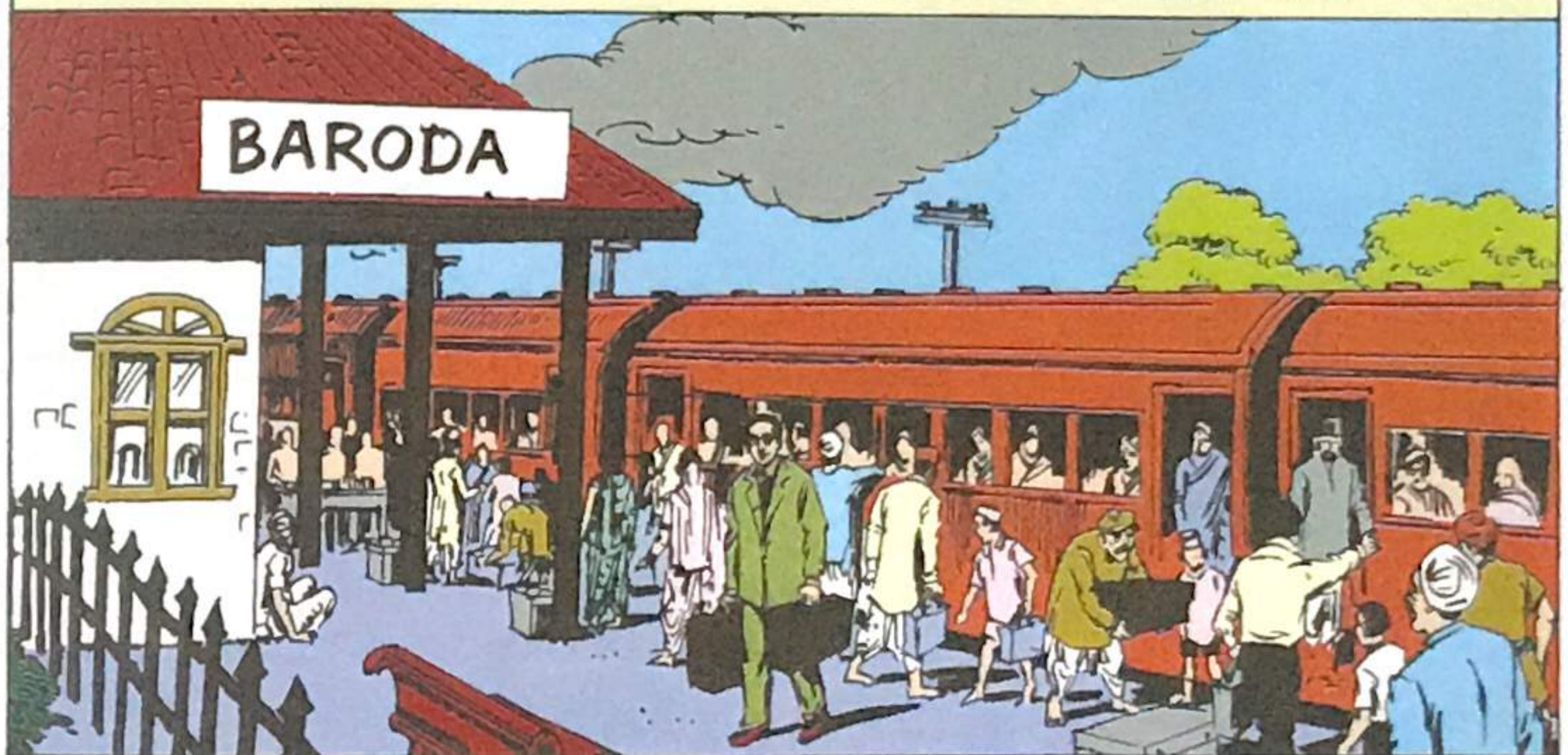
IN 1915 HE TOOK HIS M.A. DEGREE AND GOT HIS PH.D. THE NEXT YEAR.

HAVING COMPLETED HIS STUDIES IN THE U.S.A. IN LESS THAN THE STIPULATED TIME, HE PROCEEDED TO LONDON.



I MUST HAVE A DEGREE IN LAW AND I MUST UNDERTAKE FURTHER STUDIES IN ECONOMICS.

BUT AMBEDKAR WAS RECALLED TO INDIA BY THE DEWAN OF BARODA. WHEN HE ARRIVED AT BARODA, NO GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL RECEIVED HIM AT THE STATION.



HE WENT FROM HOTEL TO HOTEL, LOOKING FOR A ROOM. BUT NO ONE WOULD TAKE HIM IN.

YOU ARE THE NEW OFFICER, AREN'T YOU? SORRY, WE HAVE NO ROOMS FOR UNTOUCHABLES.



AT LAST HE FOUND ACCOMMODATION IN A PARSI GUEST HOUSE, BUT IT WAS ONLY BECAUSE HE TOOK CARE TO KEEP HIS IDENTITY A SECRET.

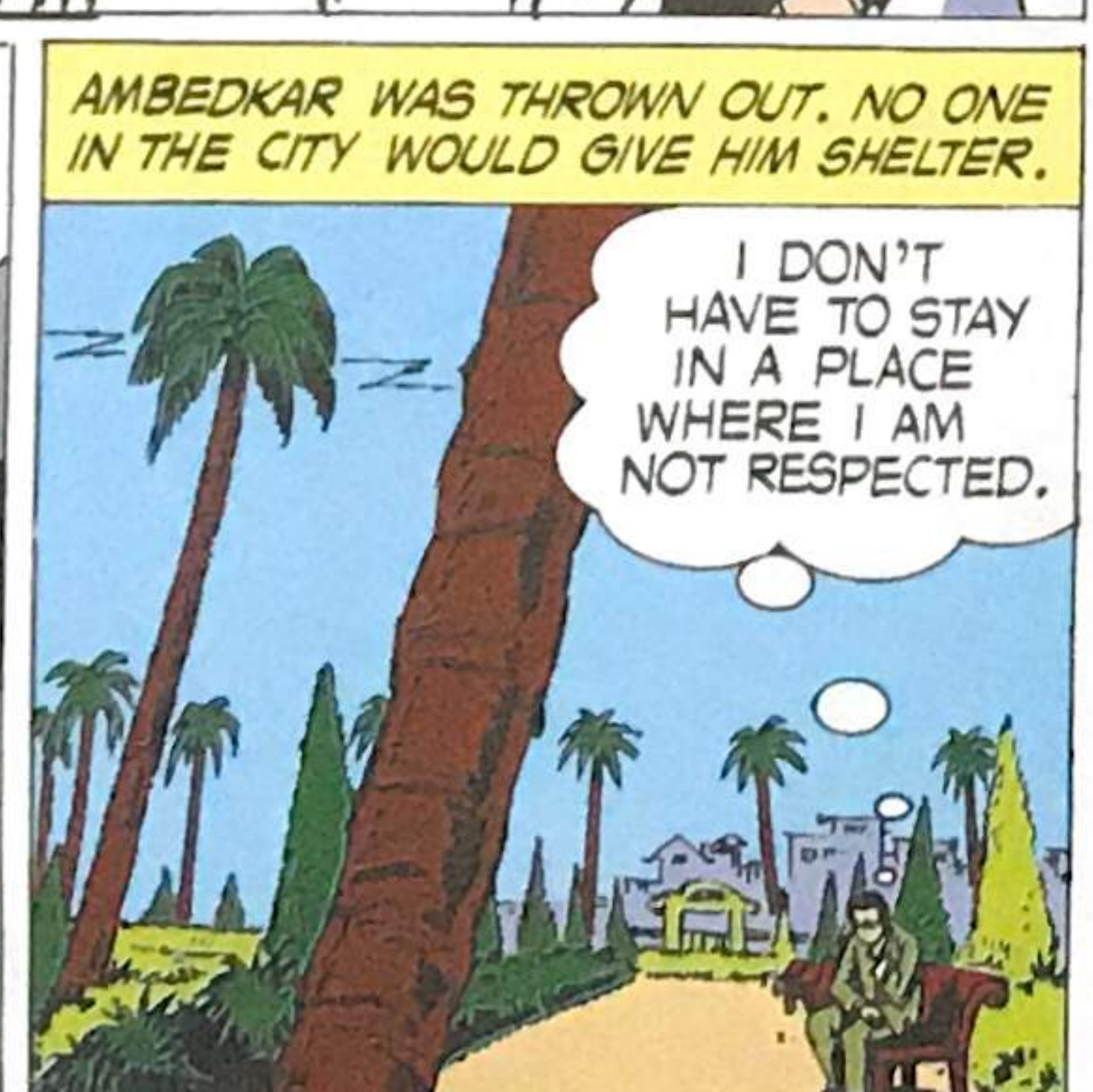
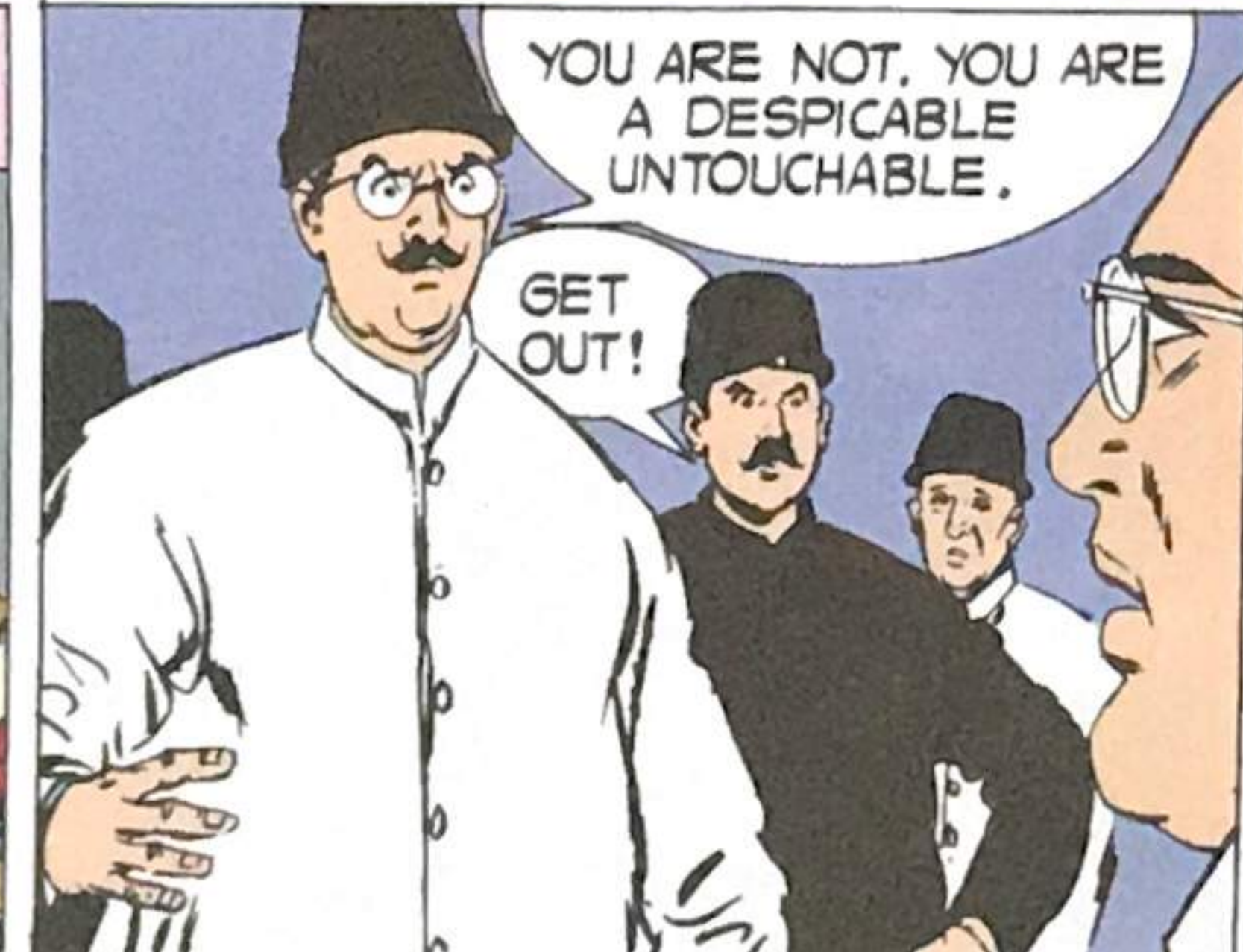
WHEN HE ENTERED HIS OFFICE THE NEXT DAY, THE PEON ROLLED UP THE CARPET LEST IT SHOULD BE POLLUTED.



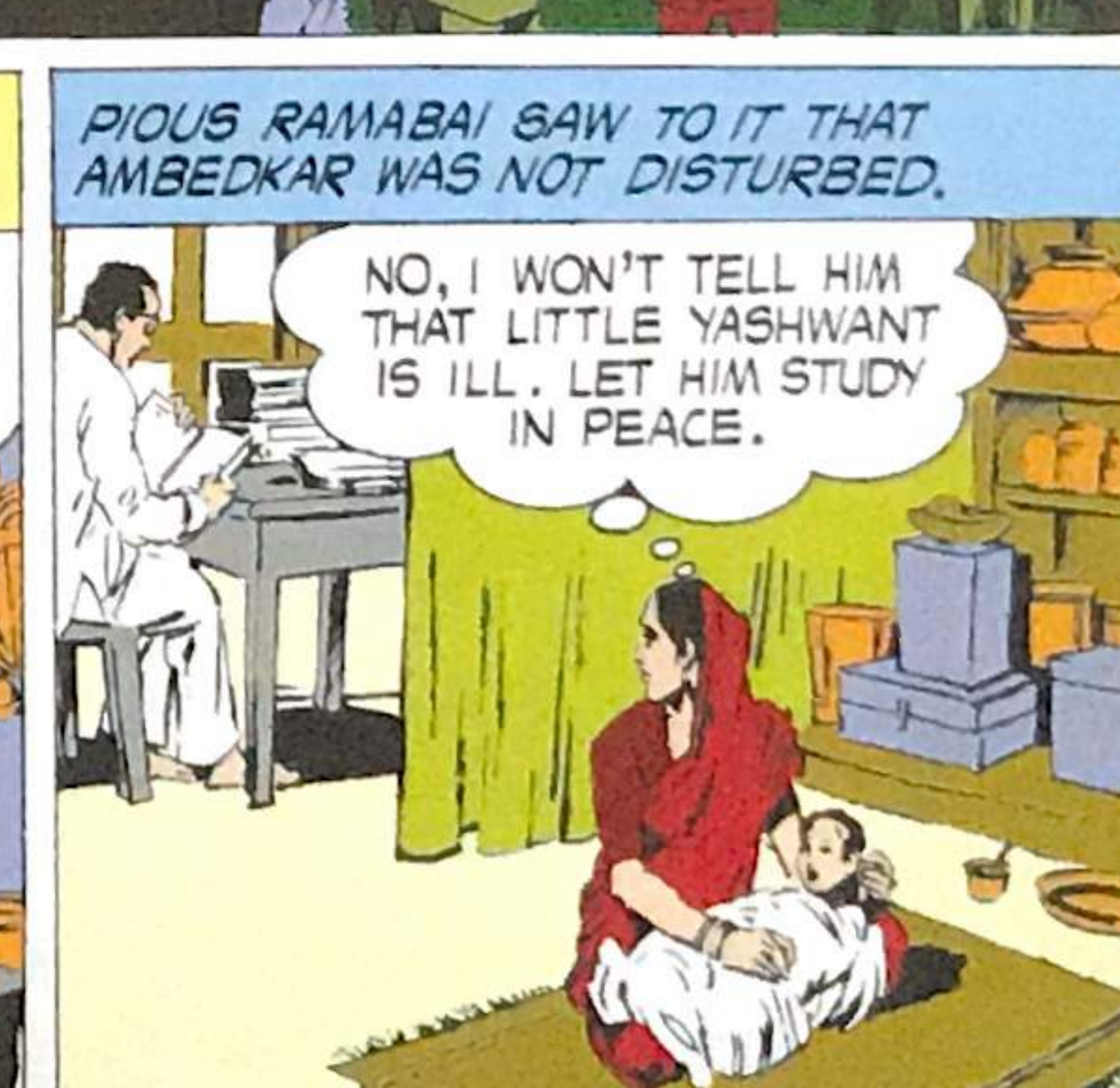
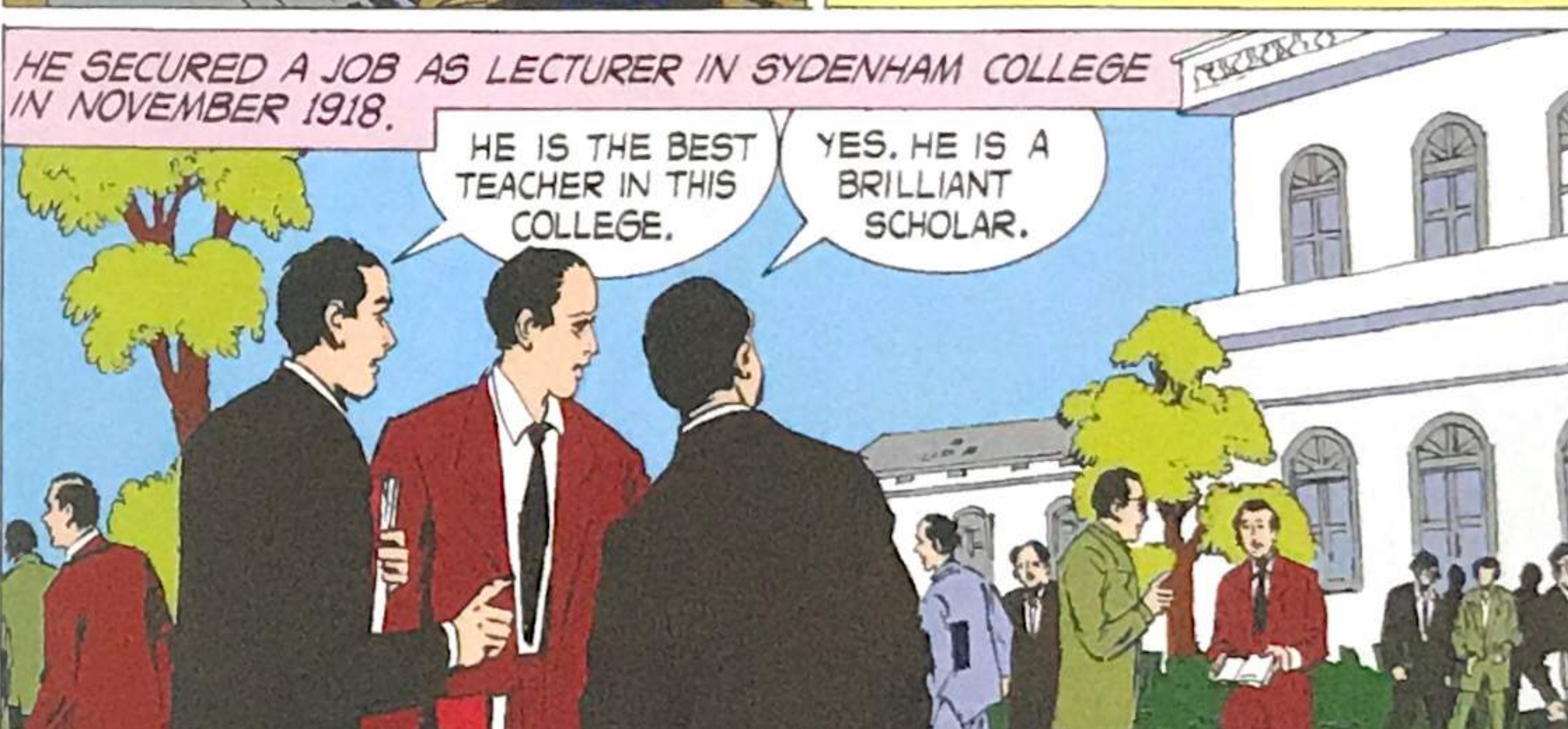
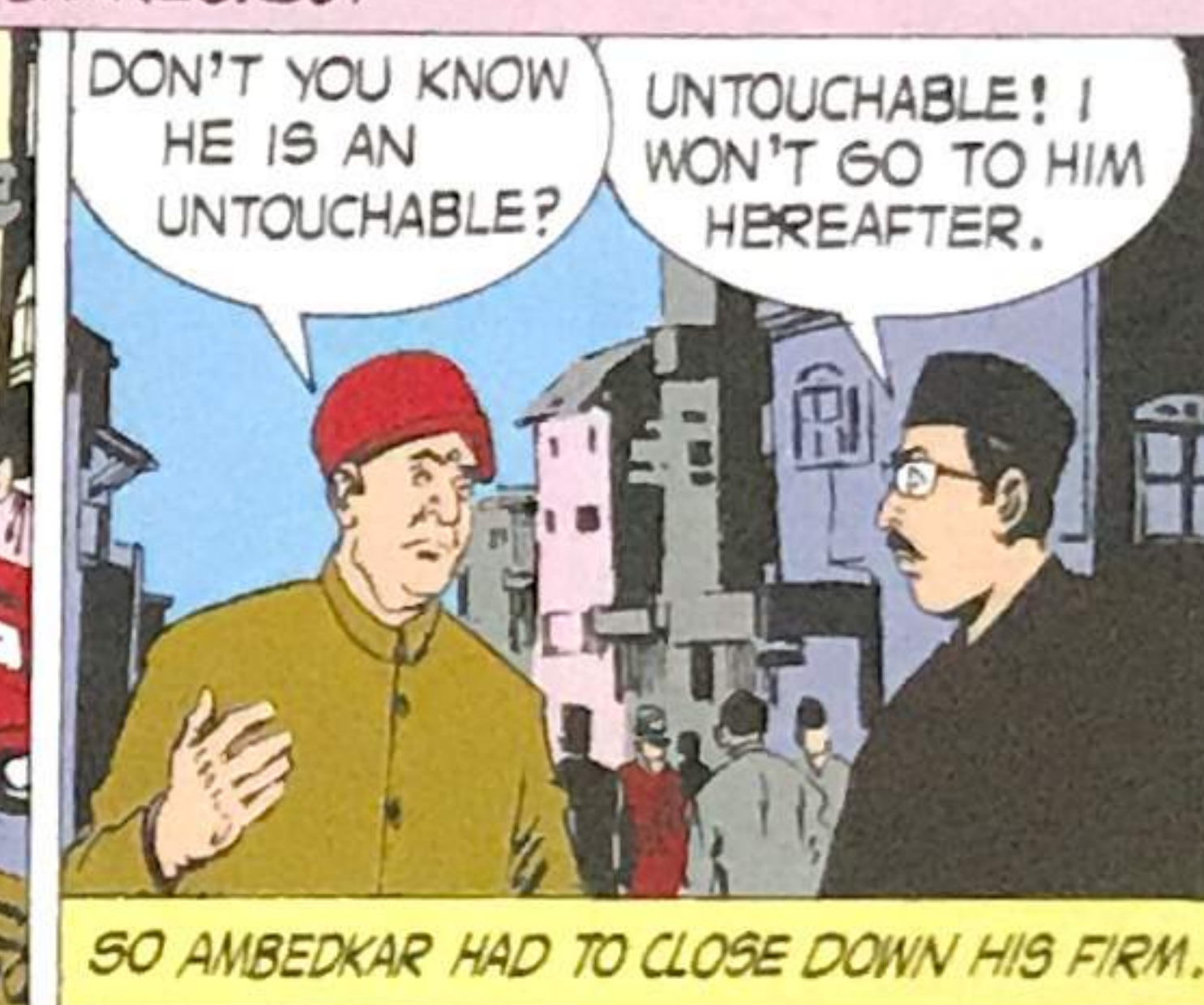
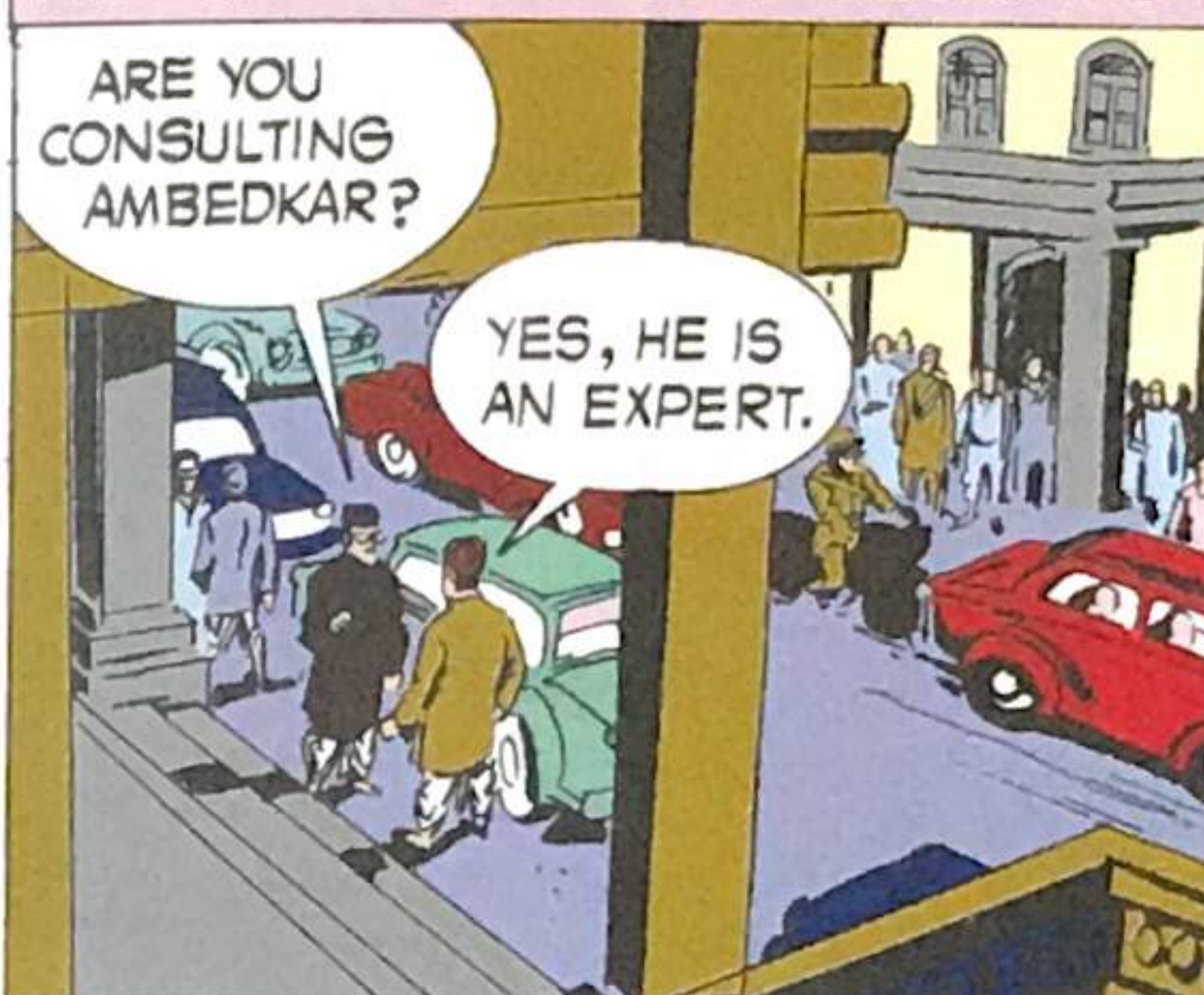
HE WAS GIVEN A TABLE IN A CORNER. THE PEON WOULD NOT GO NEAR HIM EVEN TO HAND OVER FILES.

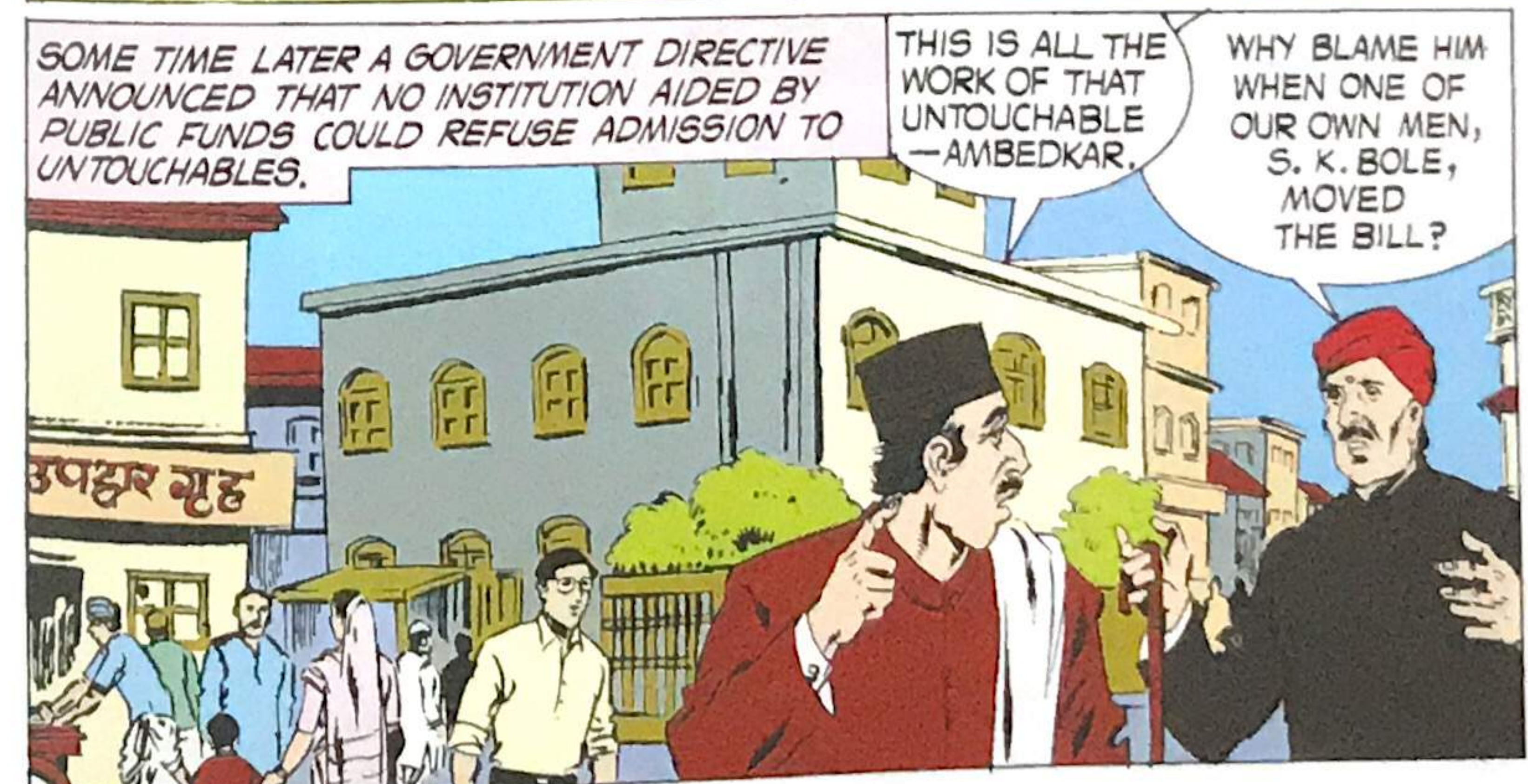
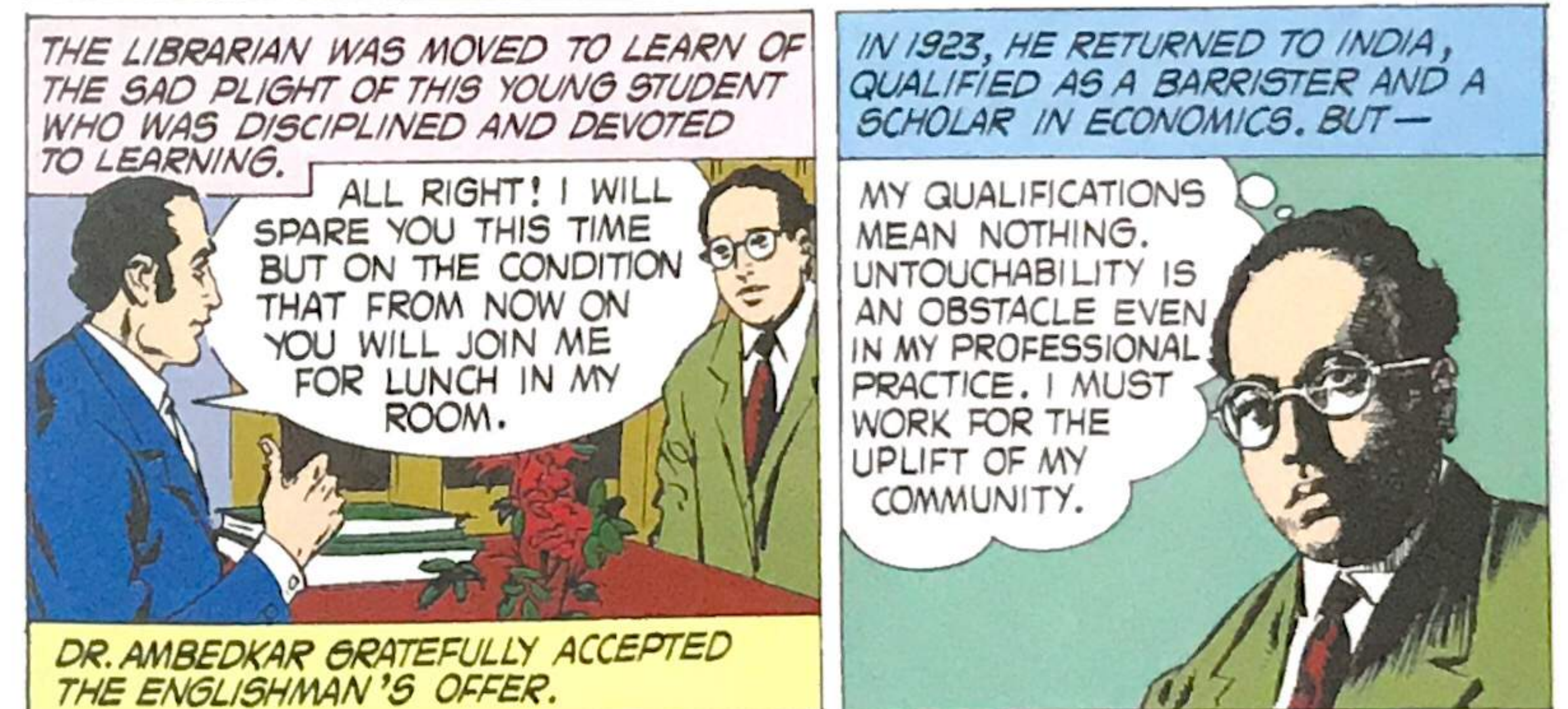
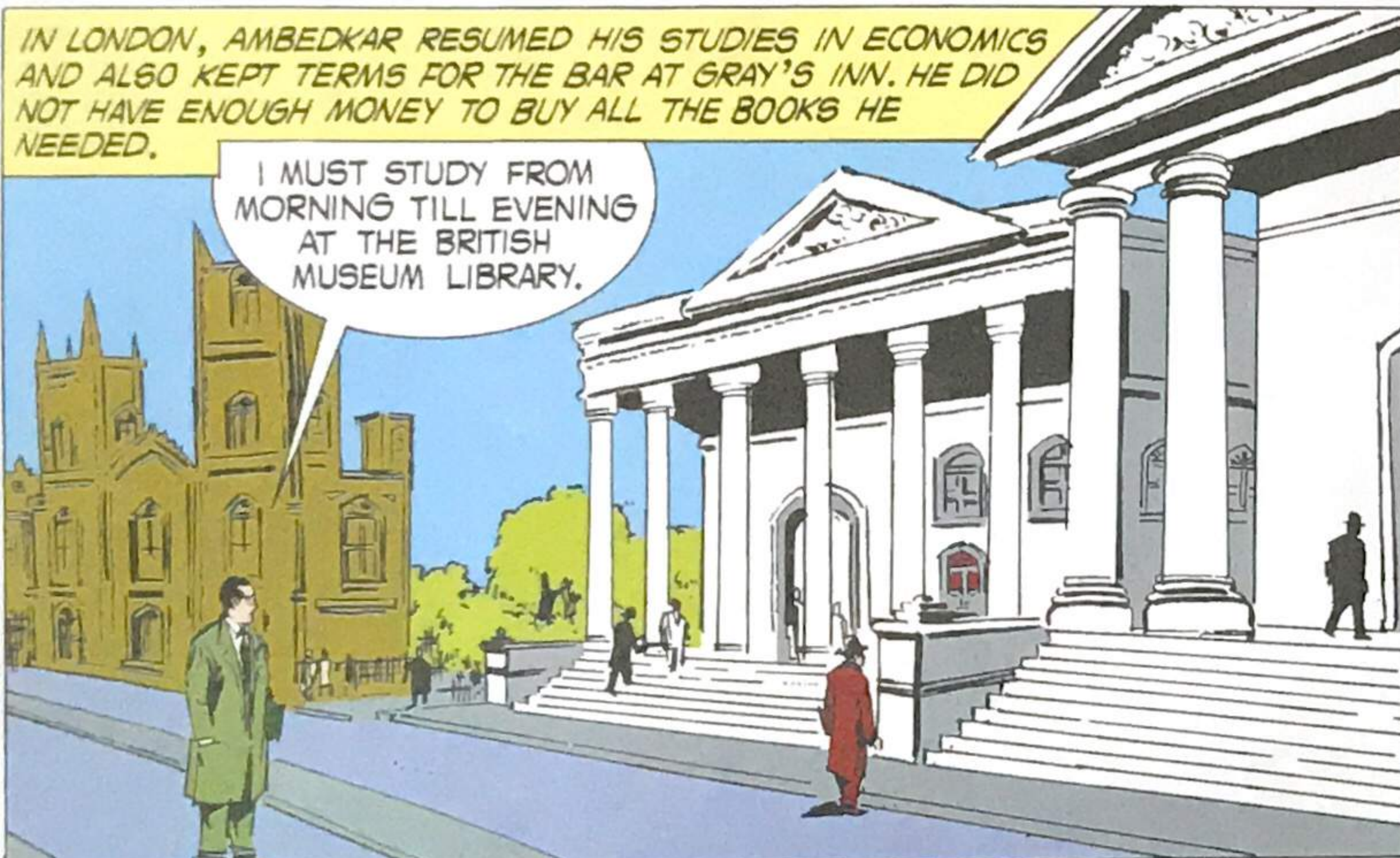
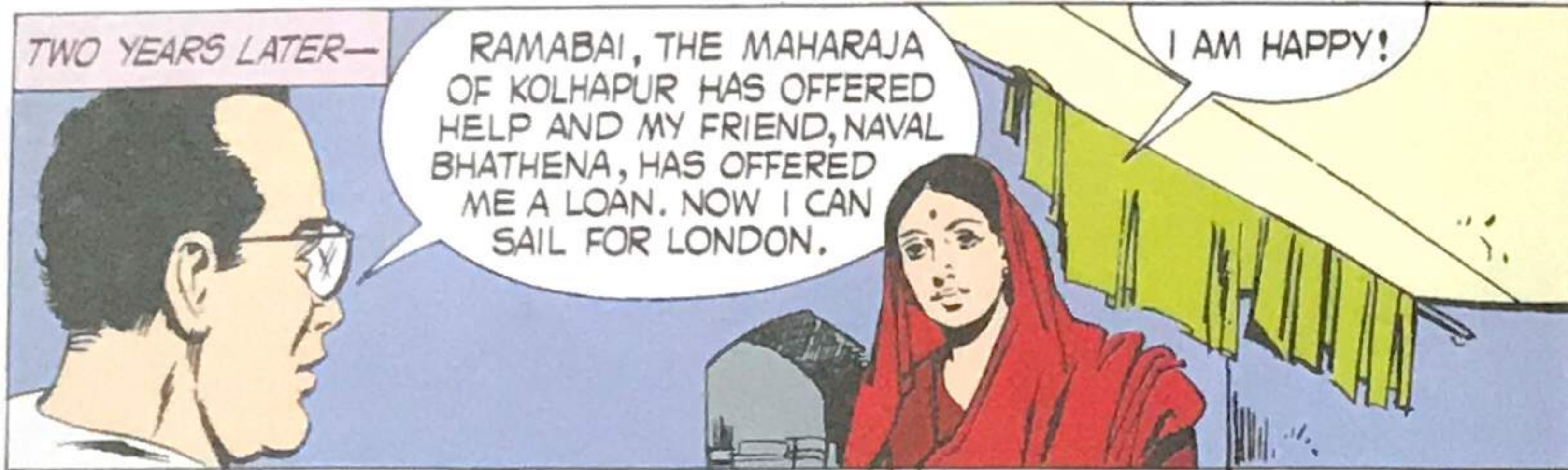


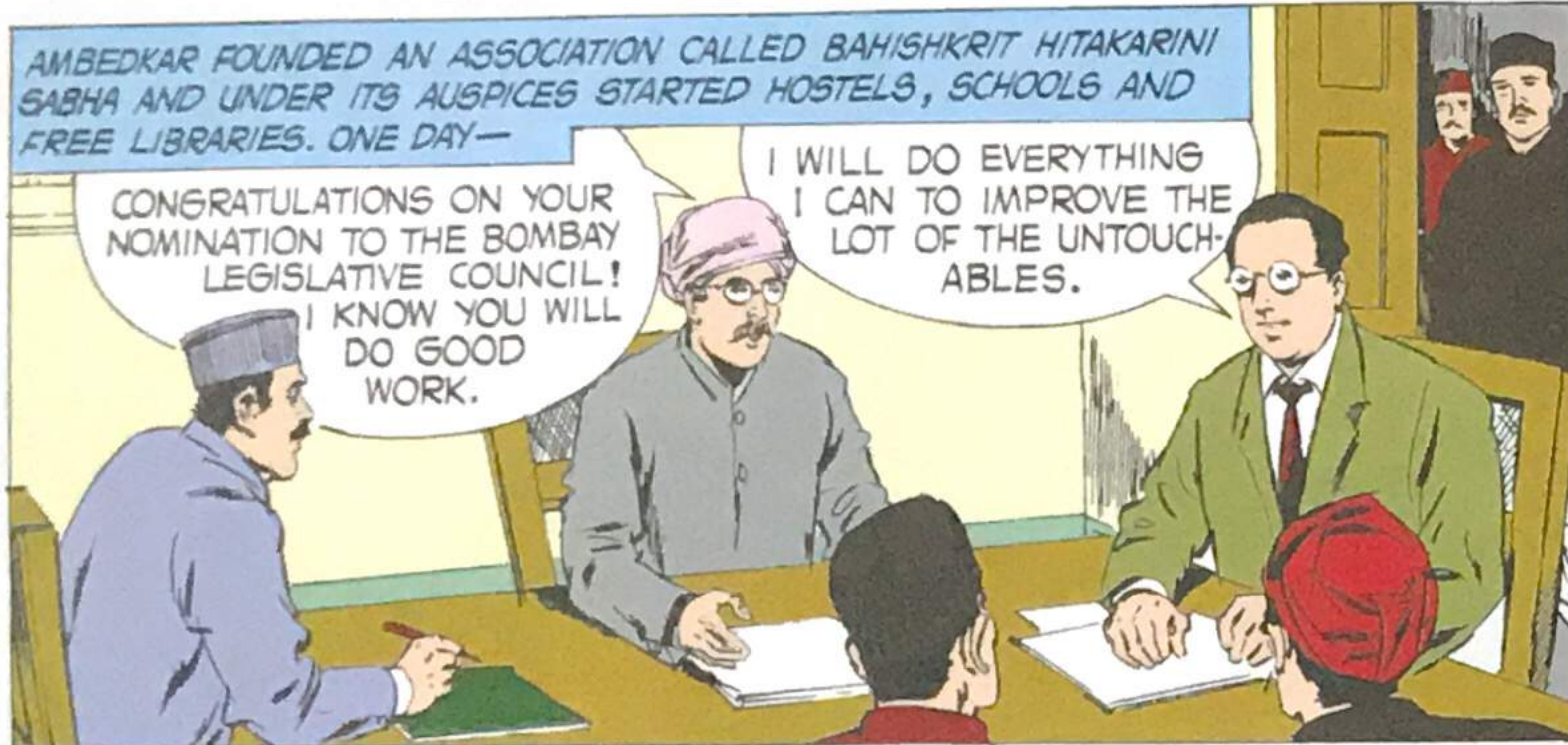
WHEN THE PARSIS IN THE GUEST HOUSE CAME TO KNOW OF HIS IDENTITY—



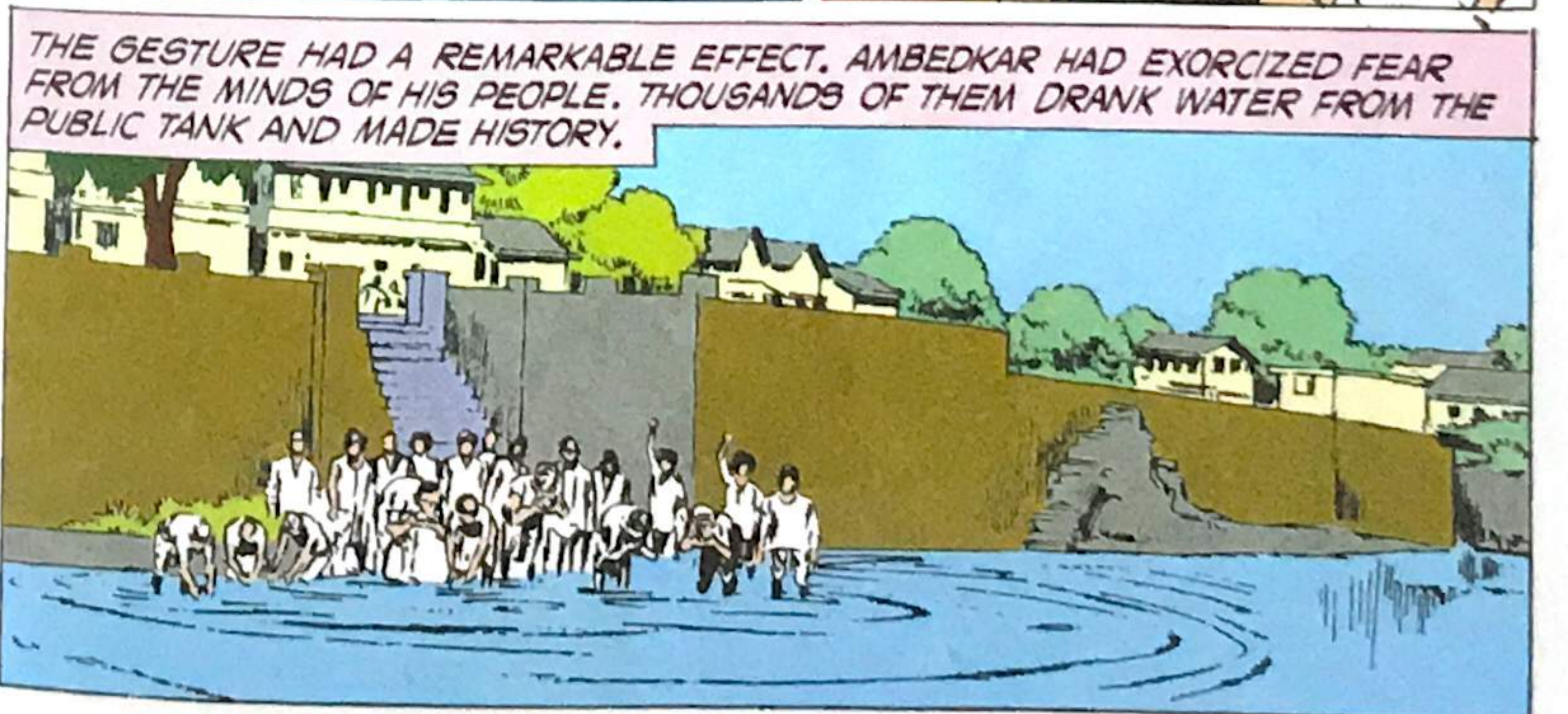
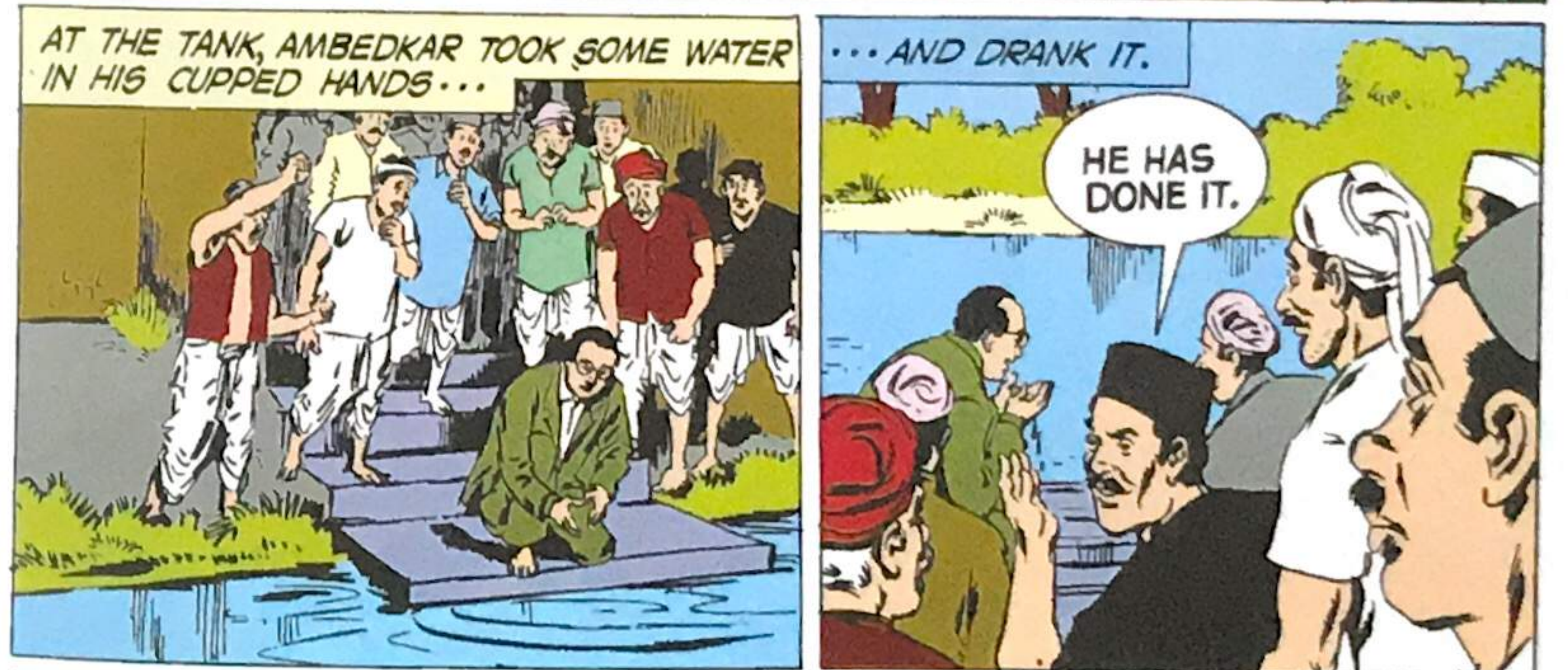
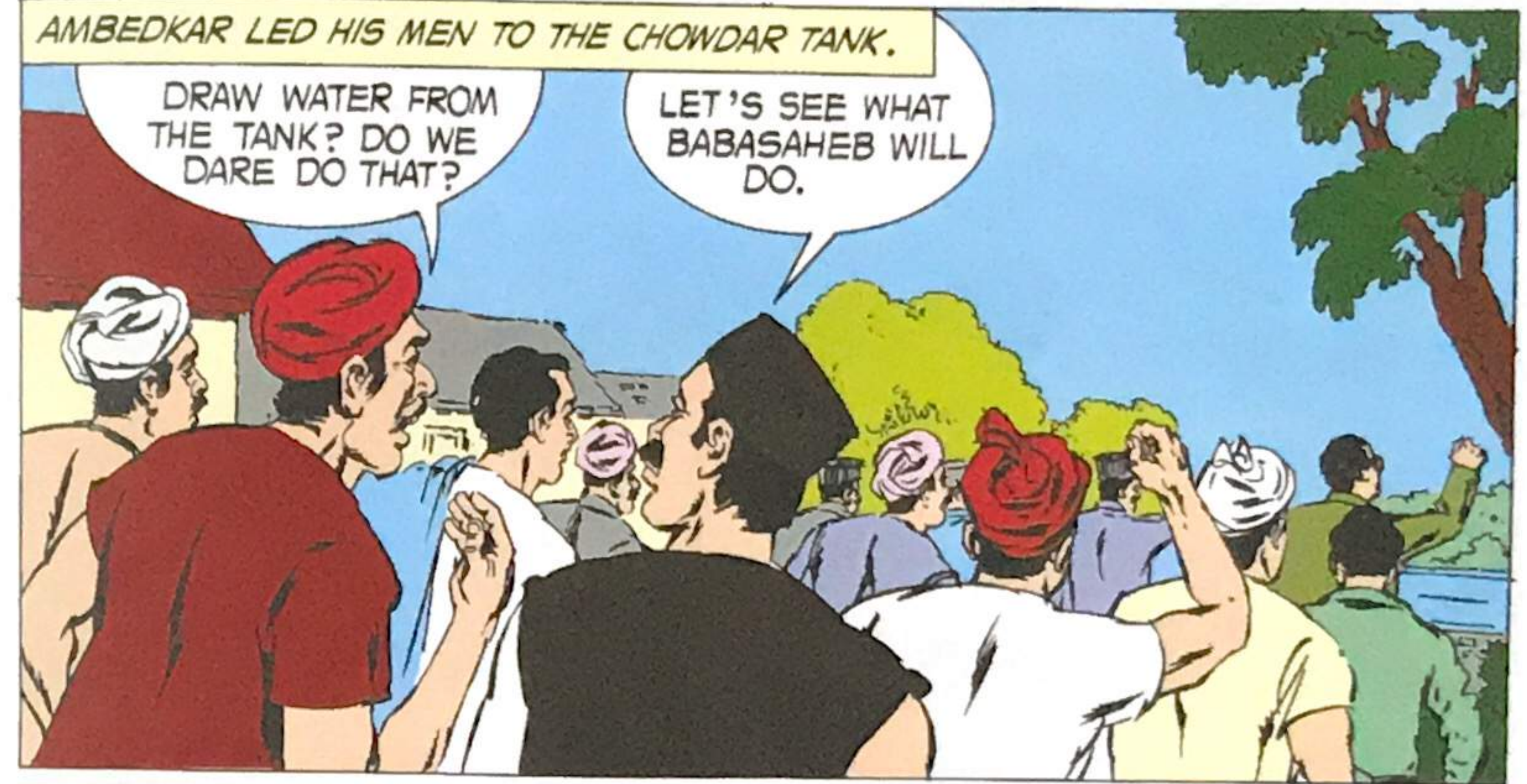
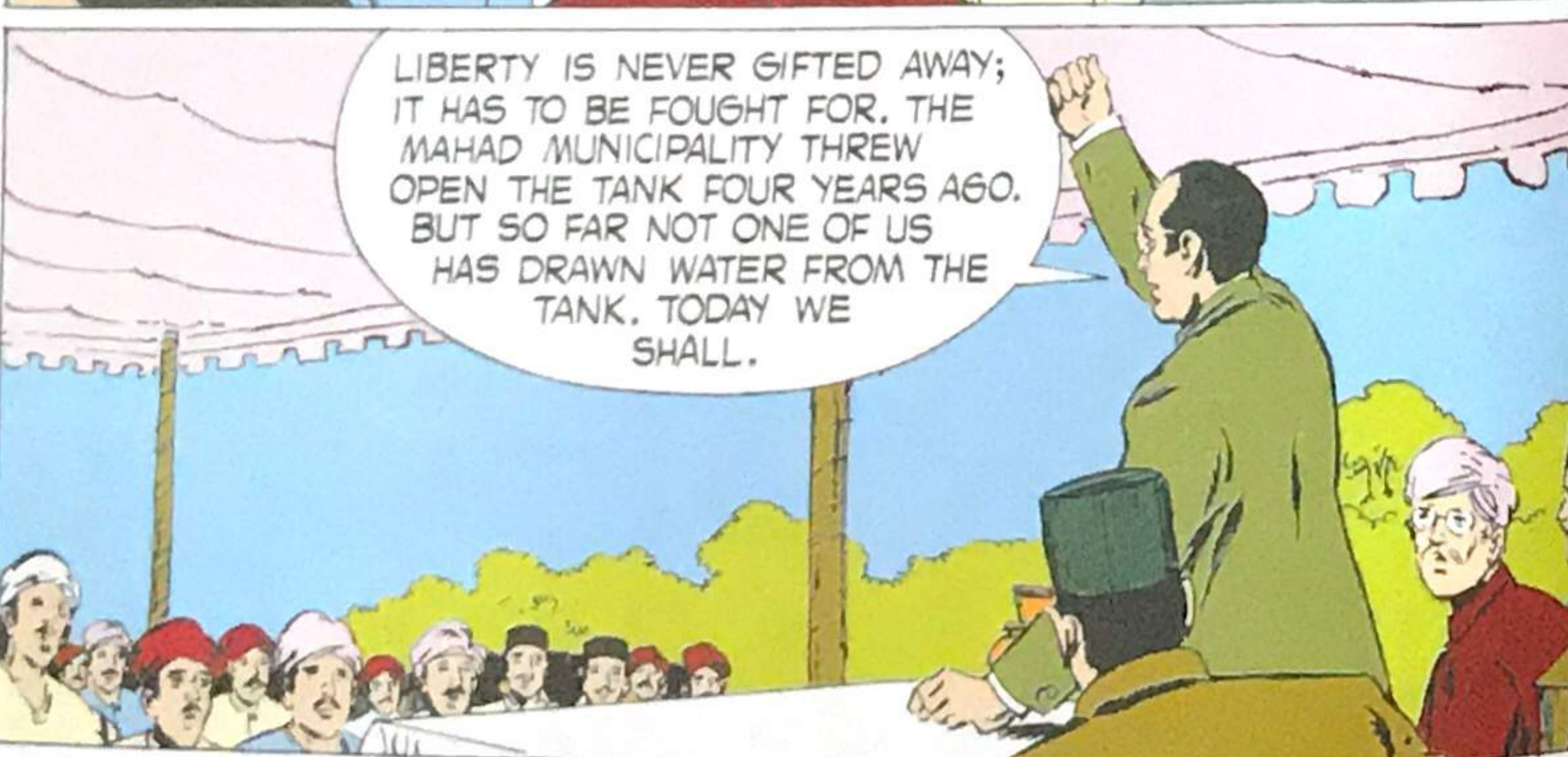
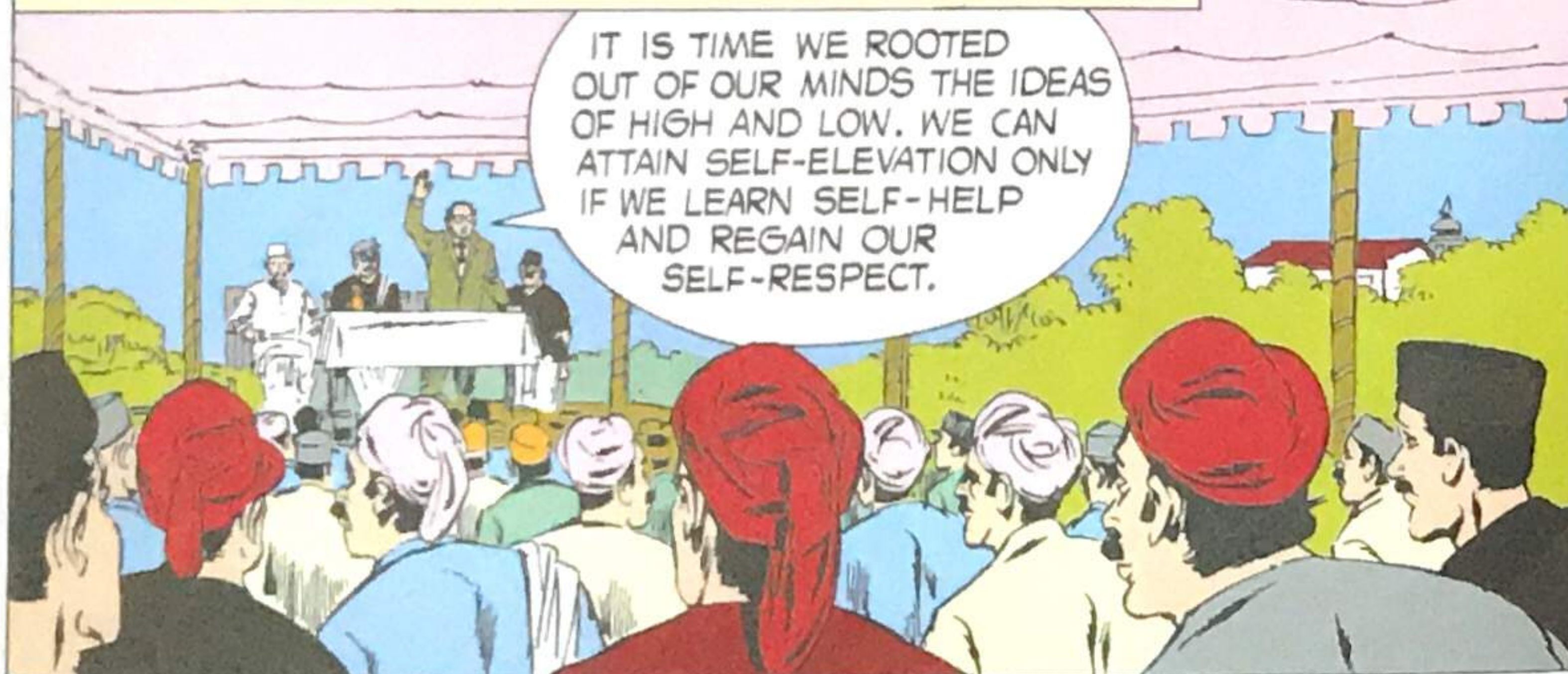
IN DISGUST, AMBEDKAR LEFT BARODA AND WENT TO BOMBAY. HE STARTED A FIRM OFFERING ADVICE IN STOCKS AND SHARES. BUT—



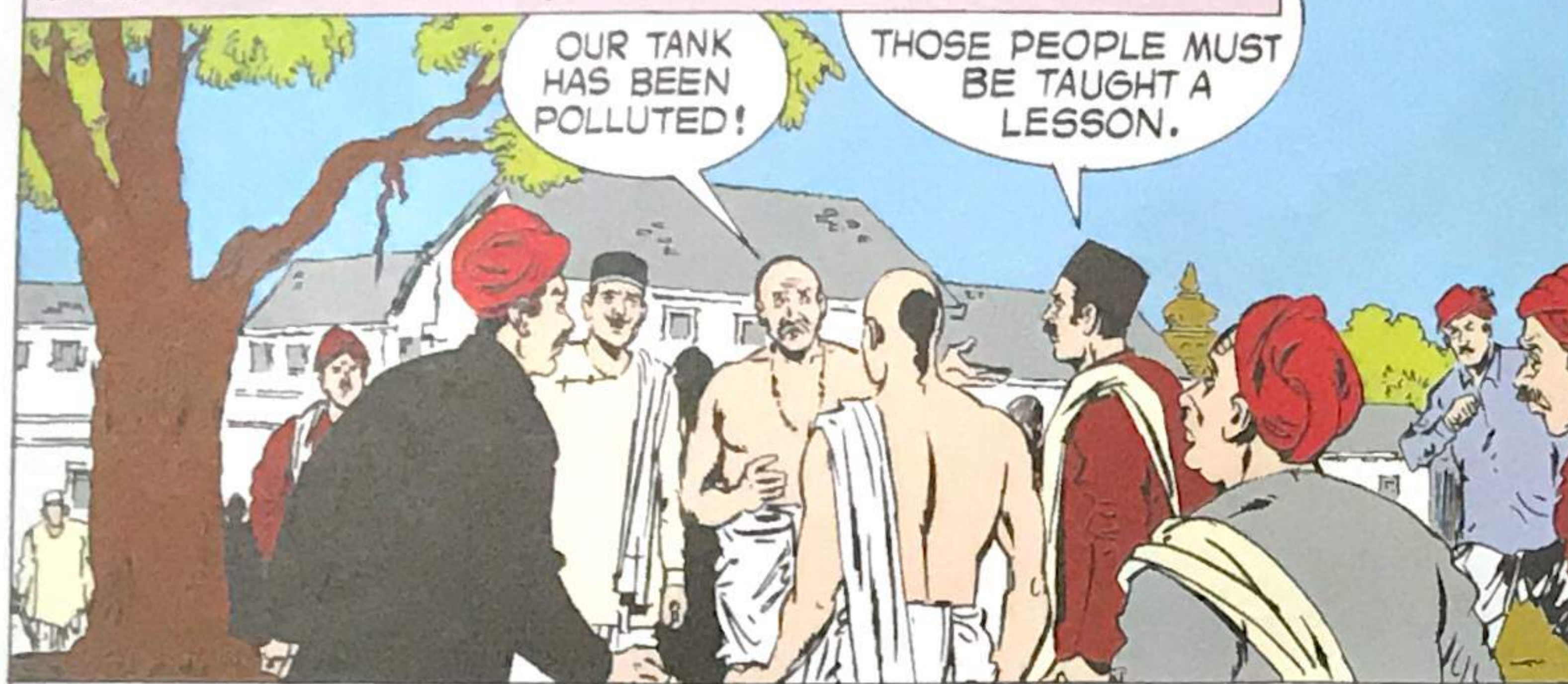




ON MARCH 19, 1927, BABASAHEB, AS AMBEDKAR CAME TO BE KNOWN, PRESIDED OVER A CONFERENCE OF THE DEPRESSED CLASSES AT MAHAD.



AFTER THEY HAD DISPERSED, SOME CASTE HINDUS HAD A MEETING.



OUR TANK HAS BEEN POLLUTED!

THOSE PEOPLE MUST BE TAUGHT A LESSON.

ARMED WITH STONES, THE CASTE HINDUS WENT TO THE VENUE OF THE CONFERENCE. MANY DELEGATES HAD ALREADY LEFT AND MANY OTHERS WERE PREPARING TO LEAVE.



BEAT THEM!

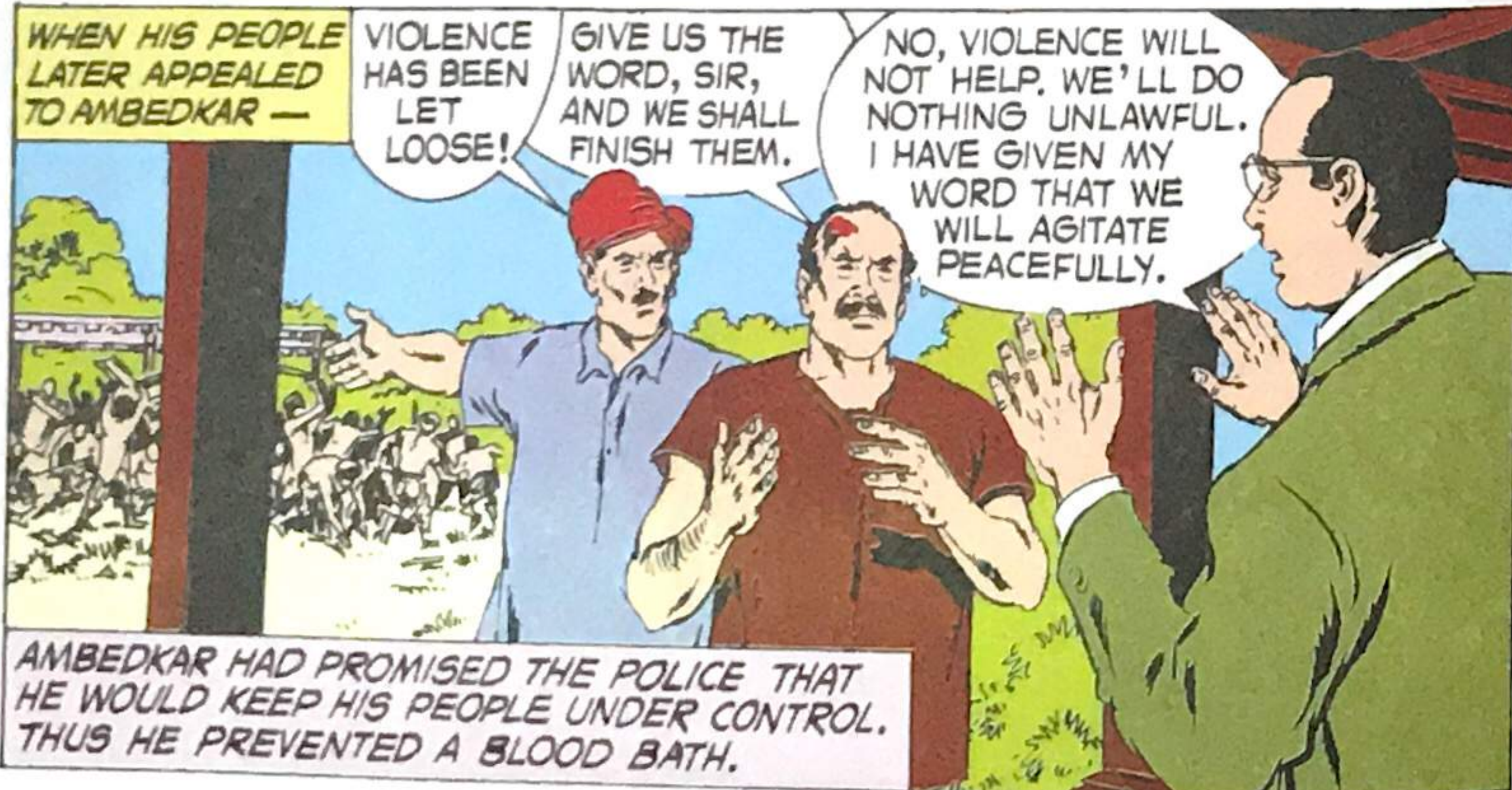
DON'T SPARE ANYONE!

WHEN HIS PEOPLE LATER APPEALED TO AMBEDKAR —

VIOLENCE HAS BEEN LET LOOSE!

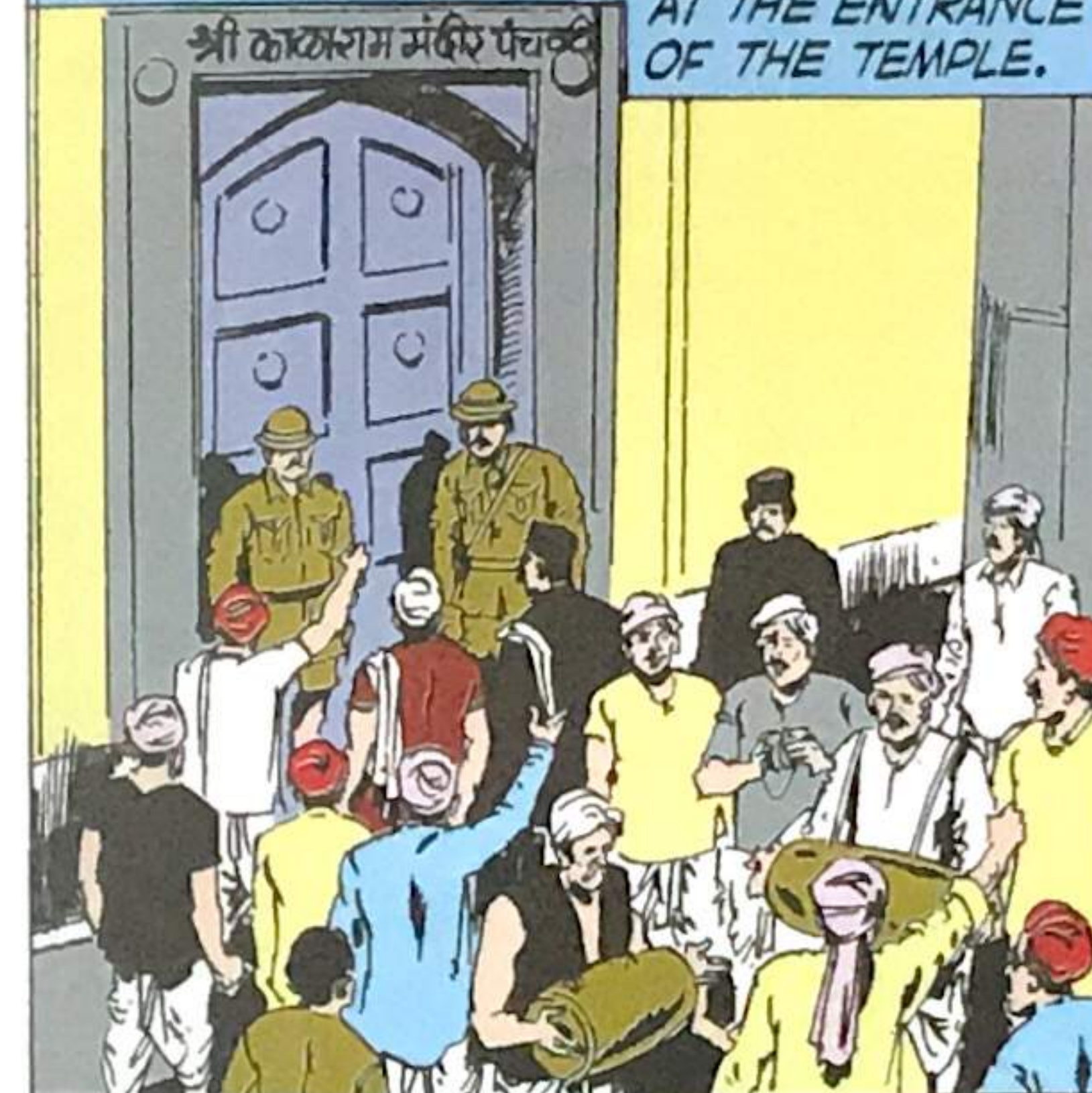
GIVE US THE WORD, SIR, AND WE SHALL FINISH THEM.

NO, VIOLENCE WILL NOT HELP. WE'LL DO NOTHING UNLAWFUL. I HAVE GIVEN MY WORD THAT WE WILL AGITATE PEACEFULLY.



AMBEDKAR HAD PROMISED THE POLICE THAT HE WOULD KEEP HIS PEOPLE UNDER CONTROL. THUS HE PREVENTED A BLOOD BATH.

IN THE PAGES OF HIS NEWLY STARTED JOURNAL, BAHISHKRIT BHARAT, HE EXHORTED HIS PEOPLE TO ENTER THE KALA RAM TEMPLE AT NASIK. ON MARCH 3, 1930, HIS FOLLOWERS WENT ON SATYAGRAHA AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE TEMPLE.



THE SATYAGRAHA CONTINUED FOR A MONTH, TILL THE EVE OF THE ANNUAL PROCESSION OF THE TEMPLE CHARIOT—

ALL RIGHT, LET THE STRONG MEN FROM BOTH THE SIDES DRAW THE CHARIOT.

IN THAT CASE WE SHALL CALL OFF THE SATYAGRAHA.



BUT AMBEDKAR'S MEN WERE DECEIVED BECAUSE THE CHARIOT WAS PUSHED PAST THEM AT GREAT SPEED.

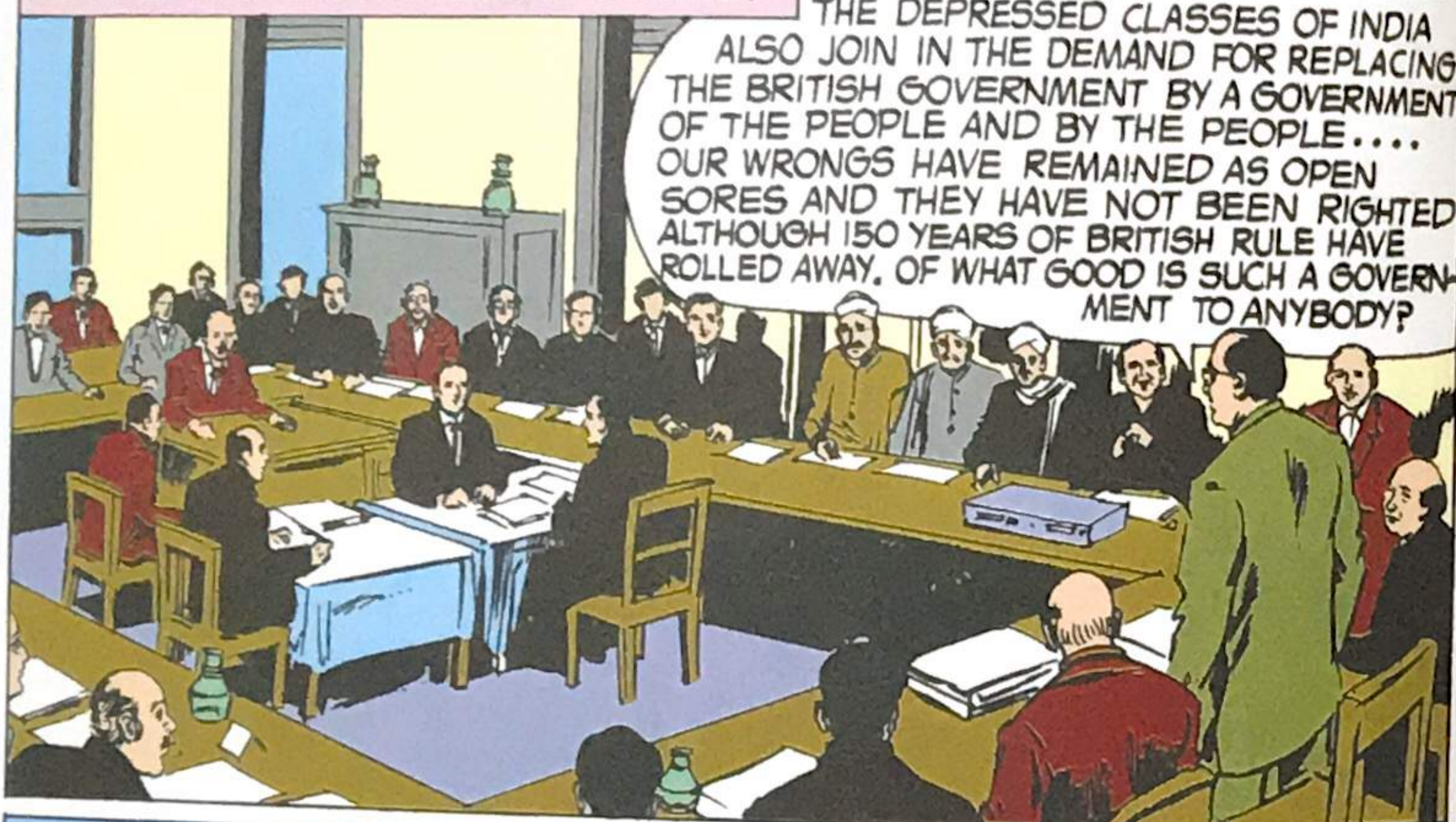


THEY ARE PELTING US WITH STONES.

LET THEM DO SO. WE SHALL REMAIN FIRM.

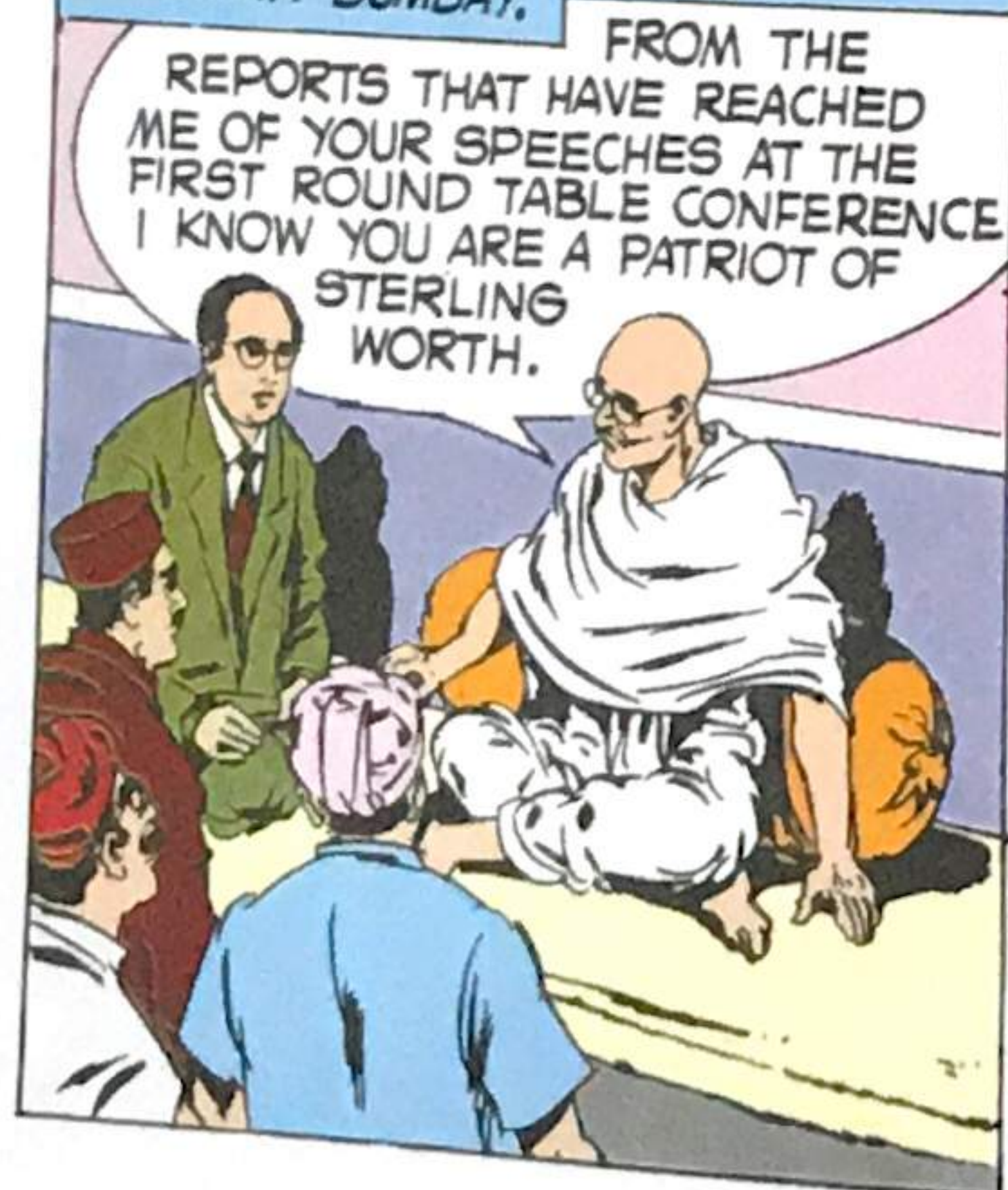
AMBEDKAR'S FOLLOWERS CONTINUED TO AGITATE AND THE TEMPLE REMAINED CLOSED FOR ABOUT A YEAR.

MEANWHILE THE FREEDOM MOVEMENT HAD GAINED MOMENTUM UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF MAHATMA GANDHI. IN 1930, A ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE WAS HELD BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IN LONDON TO FRAME A CONSTITUTION FOR INDIA. AMBEDKAR REPRESENTED THE DEPRESSED CLASSES.



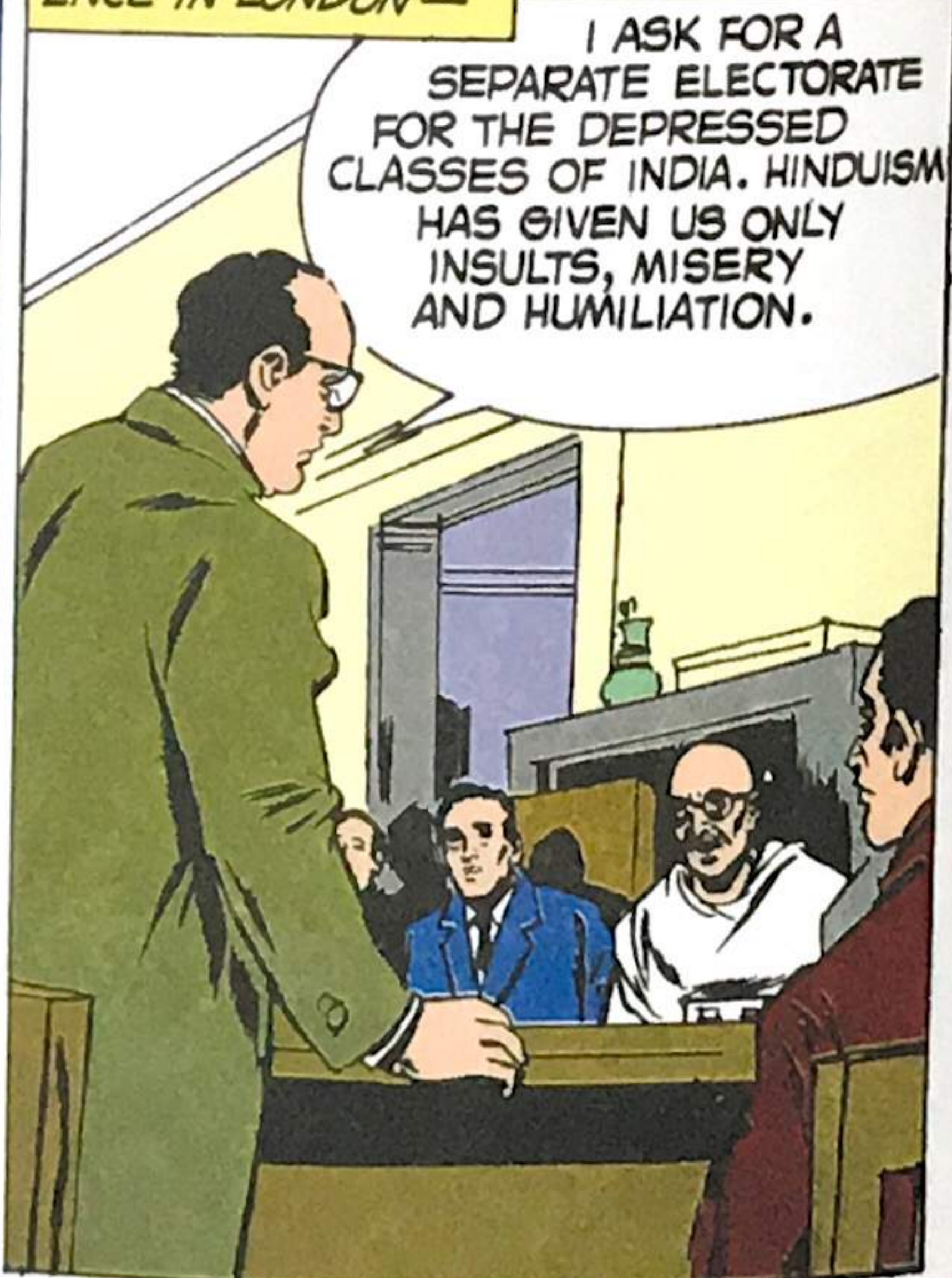
THE DEPRESSED CLASSES OF INDIA ALSO JOIN IN THE DEMAND FOR REPLACING THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT BY A GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE AND BY THE PEOPLE.... OUR WRONGS HAVE REMAINED AS OPEN SORES AND THEY HAVE NOT BEEN RIGHTED ALTHOUGH 150 YEARS OF BRITISH RULE HAVE ROLLED AWAY. OF WHAT GOOD IS SUCH A GOVERNMENT TO ANYBODY?

SOON AFTERWARDS, A SECOND ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE WAS CALLED. MAHATMA GANDHI WHO HAD BOYCOTTED THE FIRST CONFERENCE AGREED TO REPRESENT THE CONGRESS PARTY. BEFORE PROCEEDING FOR LONDON, AT GANDHI'S REQUEST, AMBEDKAR VISITED HIM AT MANI BHUVAN IN BOMBAY.



FROM THE REPORTS THAT HAVE REACHED ME OF YOUR SPEECHES AT THE FIRST ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE I KNOW YOU ARE A PATRIOT OF STERLING WORTH.

AT THE SECOND ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE IN LONDON —



I ASK FOR A SEPARATE ELECTORATE FOR THE DEPRESSED CLASSES OF INDIA. HINDUISM HAS GIVEN US ONLY INSULTS, MISERY AND HUMILIATION.

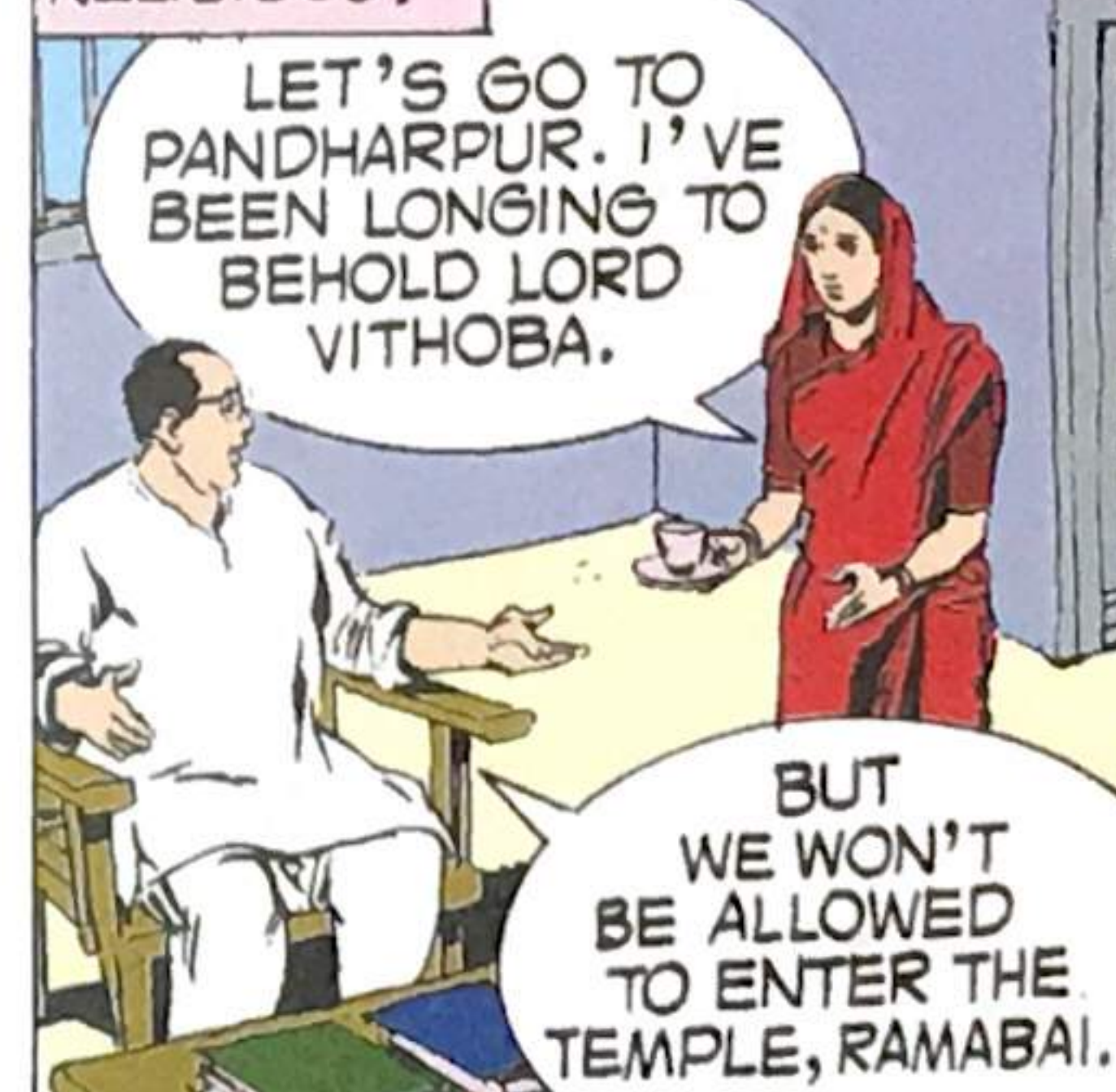
THE CONFERENCE ENDED IN A STALEMATE. BUT AMBEDKAR WAS LIONISED ON HIS RETURN TO BOMBAY BECAUSE HE HAD BROUGHT THE PLIGHT OF THE UNTOUCHABLES TO THE ATTENTION OF THE WORLD.



AMBEDKAR KI JAI!

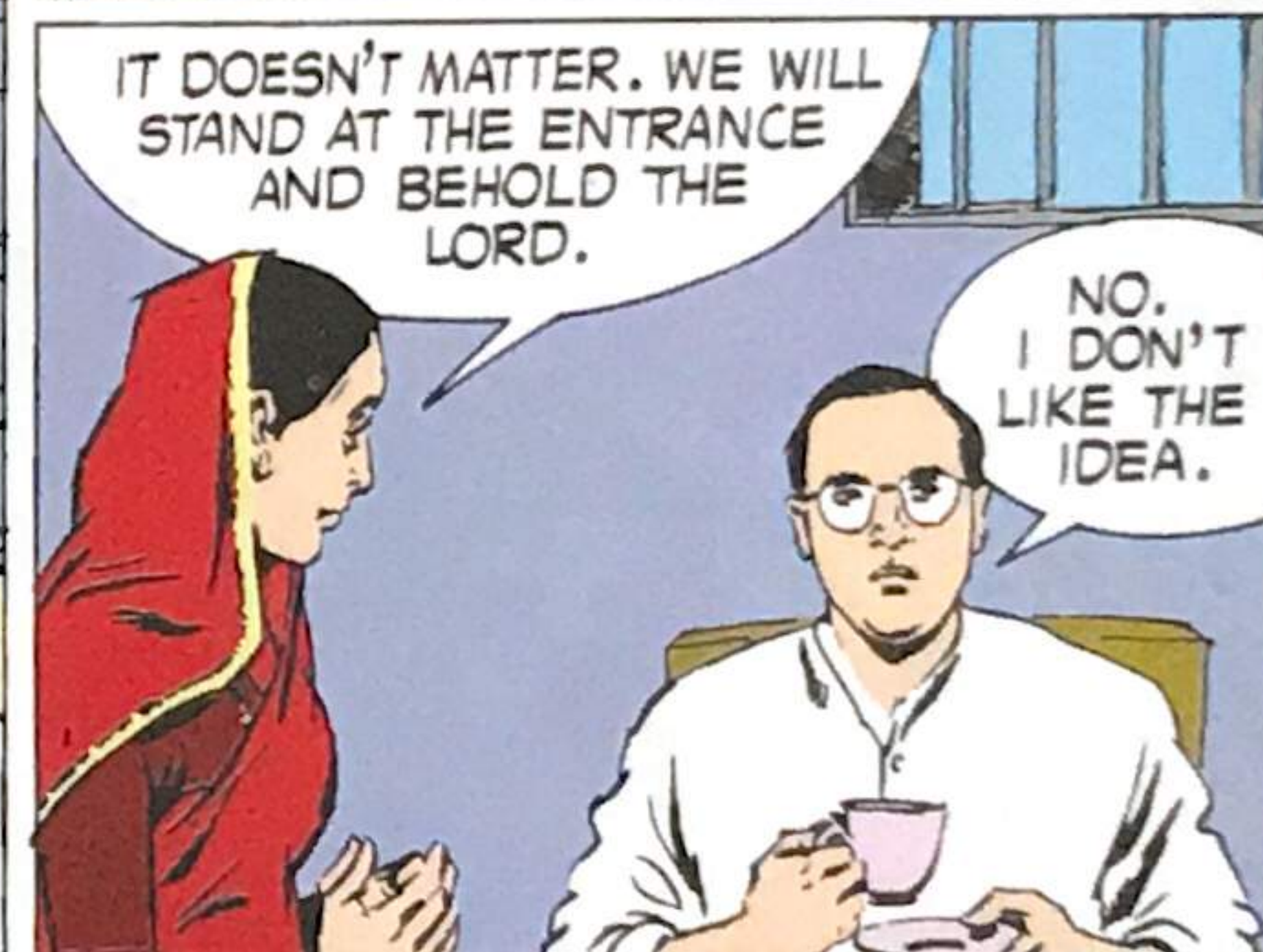
I APPEAL TO YOU NOT TO IDOLISE ME.

AMBEDKAR'S WIFE WAS DEEPLY RELIGIOUS.



LET'S GO TO PANDHARPUR. I'VE BEEN LONGING TO BEHOLD LORD VITHOBA.

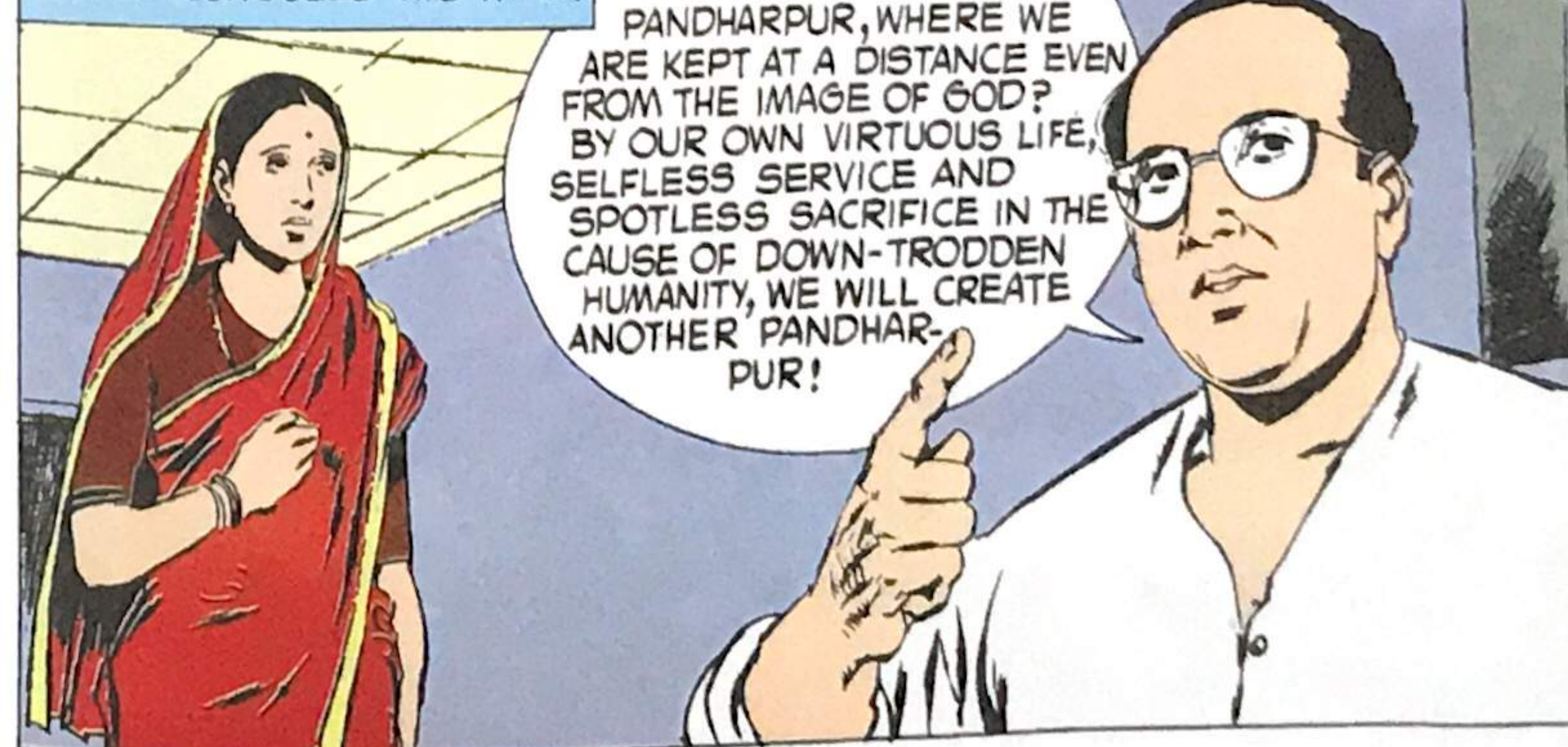
BUT WE WON'T BE ALLOWED TO ENTER THE TEMPLE, RAMABAI.



IT DOESN'T MATTER. WE WILL STAND AT THE ENTRANCE AND BEHOLD THE LORD.

NO. I DON'T LIKE THE IDEA.

BUT HE CONSOLED HIS WIFE.



WHY BOTHER ABOUT PANDHARPUR, WHERE WE ARE KEPT AT A DISTANCE EVEN FROM THE IMAGE OF GOD? BY OUR OWN VIRTUOUS LIFE, SELFLESS SERVICE AND SPOTLESS SACRIFICE IN THE CAUSE OF DOWN-TRODDEN HUMANITY, WE WILL CREATE ANOTHER PANDHARPUR!

HIS HOUSE HAD INDEED BECOME A PANDHARPUR FOR THE UNTOUCHABLES, WHO LOOKED UPON AMBEDKAR AS THEIR LIBERATOR.

BABASAHEB, THE GOVERNMENT HAS AWARDED SEPARATE ELECTORATES FOR US.

GOOD, WE HAVE WON THE FIRST ROUND.

AMBEDKAR EXPLAINED HIS STAND.

I SHALL NOT BETRAY THE JUST AND LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF MY PEOPLE, EVEN IF YOU HANG ME FROM THE NEAREST LAMP POST.

BUT GANDHIJI WAS OPPOSED TO THE DIVISION OF ELECTORATES ON THE BASIS OF CASTE. TO PROTEST, GANDHIJI, WHO WAS IN THE YERAVDA JAIL AT THE TIME, BEGAN A FAST. AT A MEETING OF NATIONAL LEADERS IN BOMBAY—

DR. AMBEDKAR, YOU ALONE CAN SAVE GANDHI'S LIFE. PLEASE AGREE TO HIS PLEA.

LATER HE VISITED GANDHIJI AT THE YERAVDA JAIL.

WE MUST BE ONE AND INDIVISIBLE. GIVE HINDUISM A LAST CHANCE TO MAKE A VOLUNTARY EXPIATION FOR ITS SINFUL PAST.

I WILL THINK IT OVER.

NO SOLUTION SEEMED POSSIBLE. AT LAST, AMBEDKAR AGREED TO SIGN THE POONA PACT, UNDER WHICH, INSTEAD OF SEPARATE ELECTORATES, MORE REPRESENTATION WAS TO BE GIVEN TO THE DEPRESSED CLASSES.

THE DIVISION OF THE PEOPLE ON CASTE LINES HAS BEEN AVERTED.

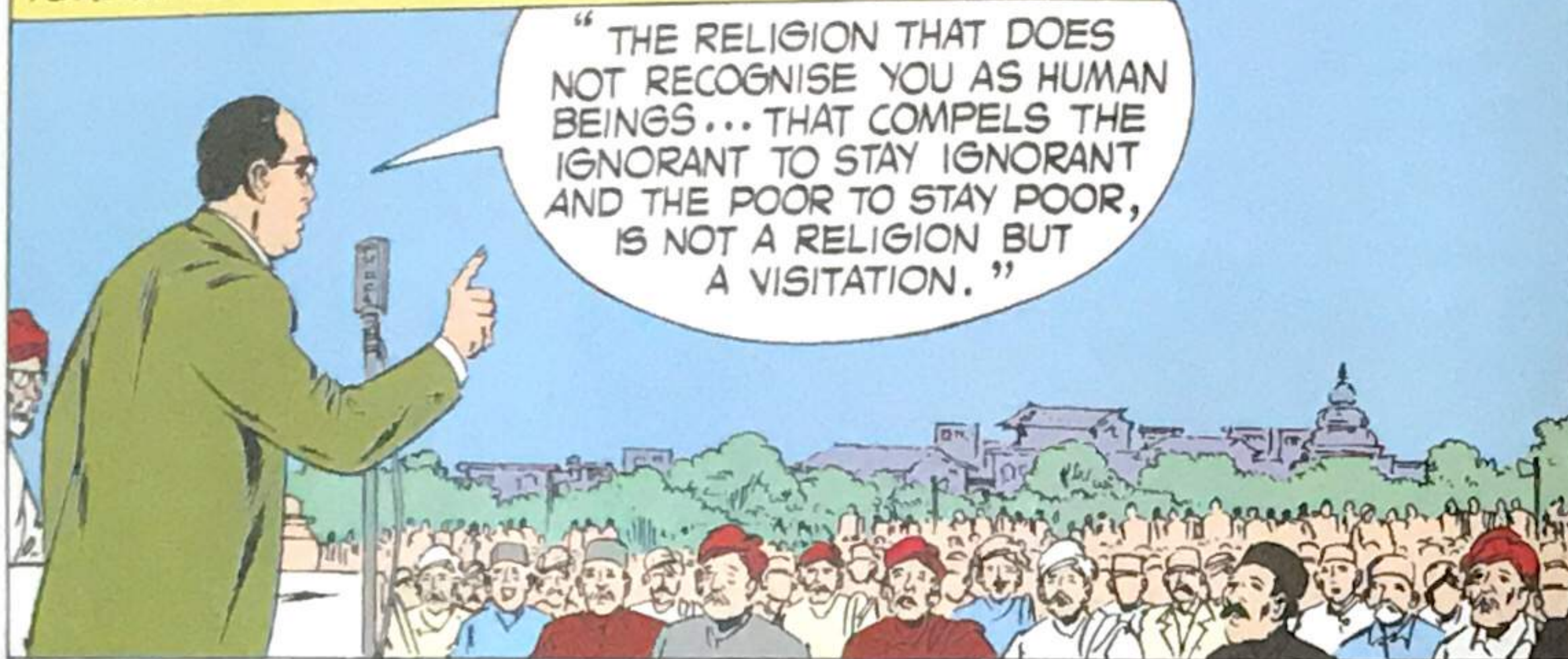
THOUGH POLITICALLY ACTIVE, HE ALWAYS REMAINED A SCHOLAR FIRST. HE HAD AMASSED A UNIQUE LIBRARY OF OVER 50,000 BOOKS FOR WHICH HE BUILT A SUITABLE HOUSE AT DADAR* AND NAMED IT RAJAGRIHA.

IN MAY 1935, A PERSONAL TRAGEDY BEFELL AMBEDKAR. HIS BELOVED WIFE, RAMABAI, DIED.

MEANWHILE, THE POONA PACT REMAINED A MERE DOCUMENT. AMBEDKAR WAS UNHAPPY. AT A CONFERENCE OF UNTOUCHABLES, HELD IN YEOLA—

WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO SECURE THE BAREST OF HUMAN RIGHTS I AM BORN A HINDU. I COULDN'T HELP IT. BUT I SOLEMNLY ASSURE YOU THAT I WILL NOT DIE A HINDU.

ADDRESSING A CONFERENCE OF THE MAHAR COMMUNITY—



"THE RELIGION THAT DOES NOT RECOGNISE YOU AS HUMAN BEINGS... THAT COMPELS THE IGNORANT TO STAY IGNORANT AND THE POOR TO STAY POOR, IS NOT A RELIGION BUT A VISITATION."

THE FIRST ELECTIONS, UNDER THE 1935 GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT, BEGAN.

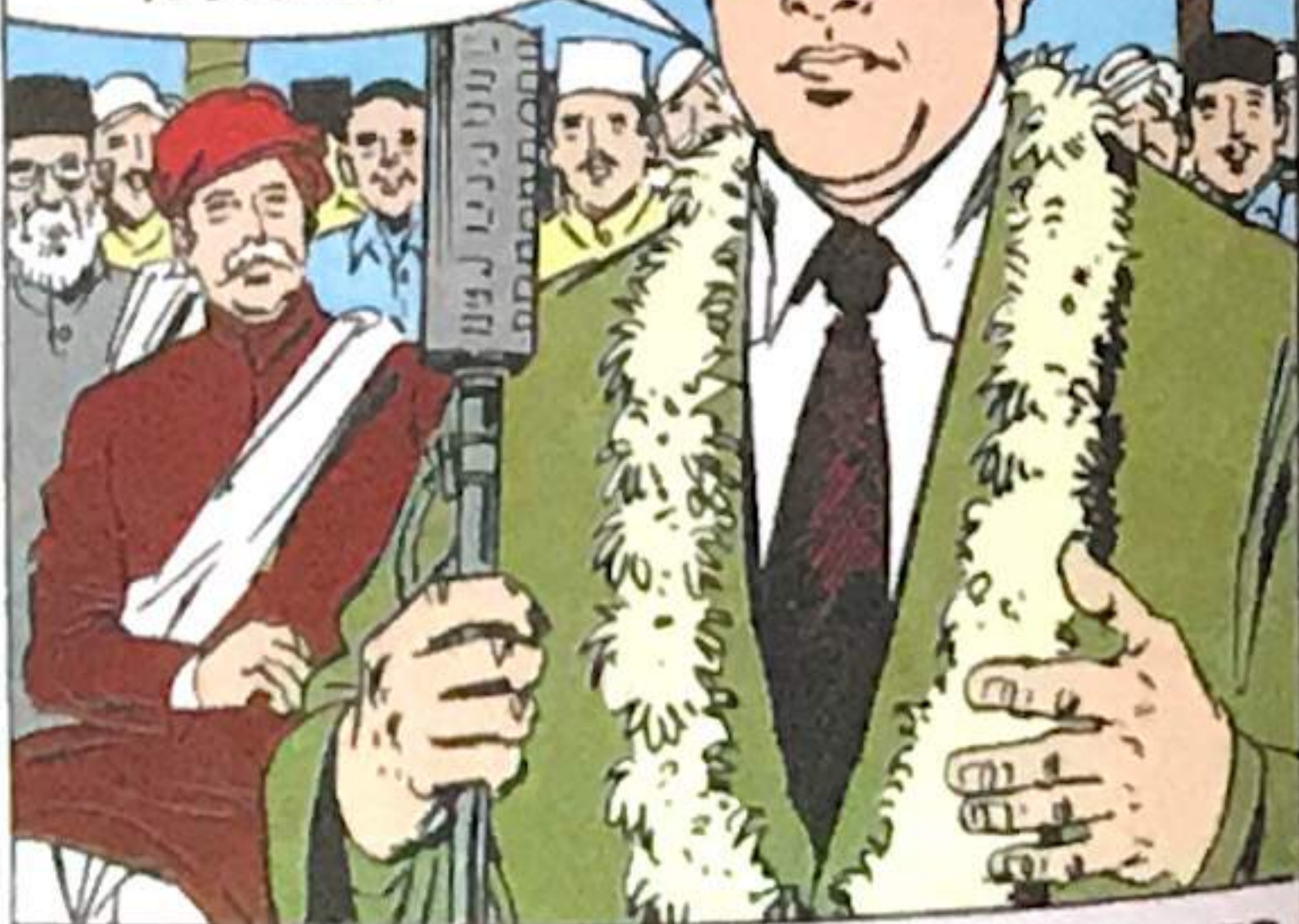


I APPEAL TO YOU IN THE NAME OF OUR NEW PARTY—THE INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY.

AMBEDKAR AND FOURTEEN OTHERS OF THE INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY WERE ELECTED TO THE BOMBAY LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

IN 1939, THE SECOND WORLD WAR BROKE OUT. THE CONGRESS MINISTRIES RESIGNED. IN JULY 1942, THE VICEROY APPOINTED AMBEDKAR AS LABOUR MINISTER IN THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL. AT A RECEPTION, GIVEN IN HIS HONOUR—

I WAS BORN OF THE POOR. I WAS BROUGHT UP AMONG THEM, HAVE LIVED AMONG THEM. I HAVE SLEPT LIKE THEM ON DAMP FLOORS COVERED WITH SACK-CLOTH AND SHARED THE SORROWS OF MY PEOPLE. I WILL REMAIN ABSOLUTELY UNCHANGED IN MY ATTITUDE TO MY FRIENDS AND TO THE REST OF THE WORLD.



HE FORMED THE ALL INDIA SCHEDULED CASTES FEDERATION IN 1942. IN SPITE OF HIS HARD WORK THE FEDERATION FARED BADLY AT THE GENERAL ELECTIONS HELD IN SEPTEMBER 1945.

IN 1946, AMBEDKAR WAS ELECTED TO THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. HIS FIRST SPEECH AGAIN REVEALED A NOBLE SOUL.

...AND WITH ALL OUR CASTES AND CREEDS I HAVE NOT THE SLIGHTEST HESITATION IN SAYING THAT WE SHALL IN SOME FORM BE A UNITED PEOPLE.

THE THIRD SESSION OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ADOPTED A RESOLUTION MAKING UNTOUCHABILITY AN OFFENCE.

THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY MADE DR. AMBEDKAR THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE APPOINTED TO DRAFT THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA. AND THE BURDEN OF PREPARING A CONSTITUTION FOR THE WORLD'S LARGEST DEMOCRACY FELL UPON DR. AMBEDKAR.



HE MARRIED HER IN APRIL 1948.

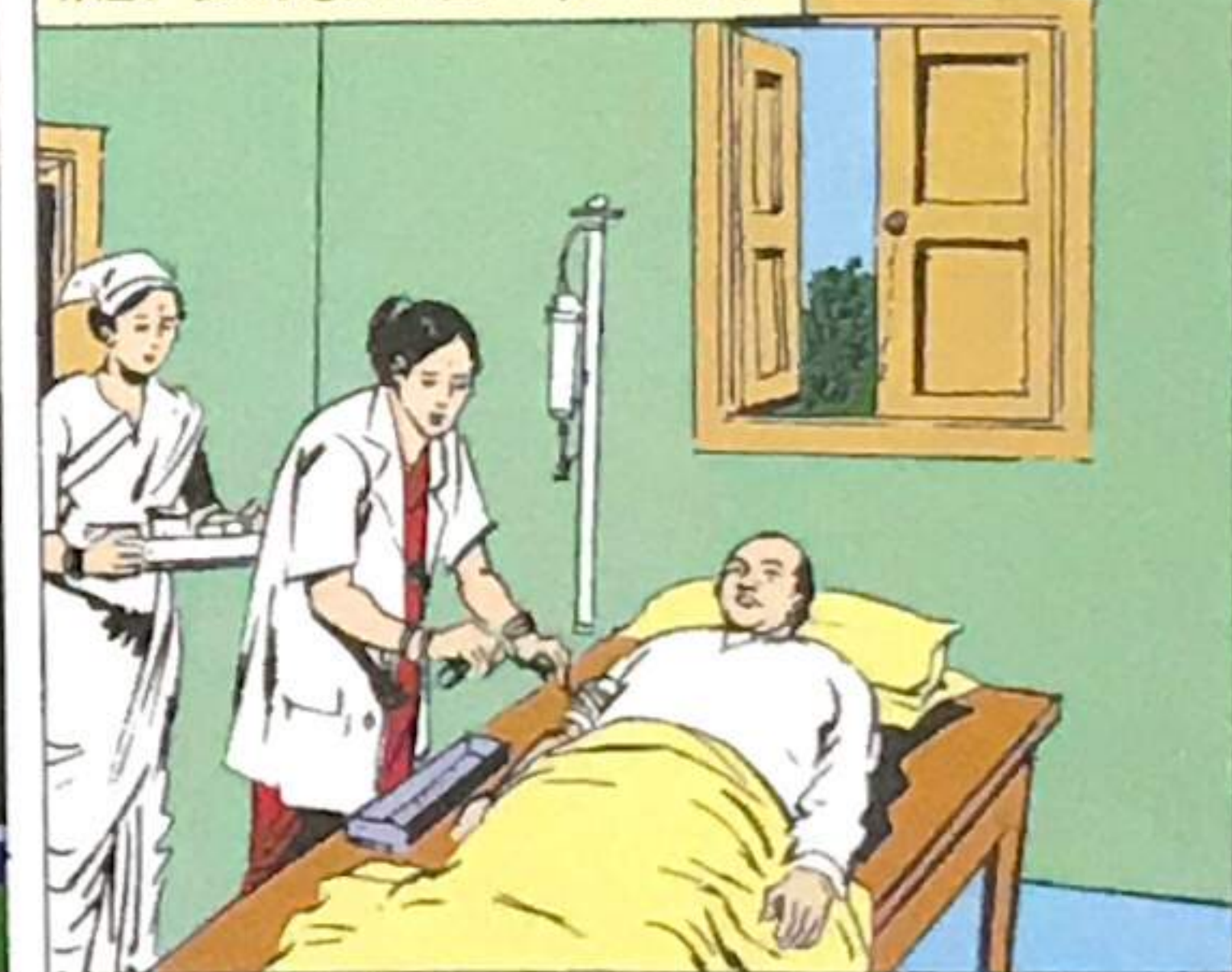


WHEN INDIA BECAME INDEPENDENT IN AUGUST 1947, AMBEDKAR BECAME THE FIRST LAW MINISTER OF INDEPENDENT INDIA.



WHAT AN ACHIEVEMENT! THIS GREAT MAN WILL LEAD HIS COMMUNITY TO HONOUR AND DIGNITY.

AFTER COMPLETING THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION, AMBEDKAR FELL ILL. AT THE NURSING HOME IN BOMBAY HE MET DR. SHARDA KABIR.



ON NOVEMBER 4, 1948, DR AMBEDKAR PRESENTED THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION TO THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

...AND I APPEAL TO ALL INDIANS TO BE A NATION BY DISCARDING CASTES WHICH HAVE BROUGHT ABOUT SEPARATION IN SOCIAL LIFE AND CREATED JEALOUSY AND HATRED.

ON NOVEMBER 26, 1949, THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ADOPTED THE CONSTITUTION IN THE NAME OF THE PEOPLE OF INDIA.

DR. AMBEDKAR WAS INVITED TO THE BUDDHIST CONFERENCE AT CEYLON. ON HIS RETURN HE SPOKE IN BOMBAY AT THE BUDDHA TEMPLE.

IN ORDER TO END THEIR HARDSHIPS, PEOPLE SHOULD EMBRACE BUDDHISM. I AM GOING TO DEVOTE THE REST OF MY LIFE TO THE REVIVAL AND SPREAD OF BUDDHISM IN INDIA.

FOR THE NEXT EIGHT YEARS, DR. AMBEDKAR CARRIED ON A RELENTLESS FIGHT AGAINST SOCIAL EVILS AND SUPERSTITIONS. ON OCTOBER 14, 1956 AT NAGPUR, AMBEDKAR EMBRACED BUDDHISM.

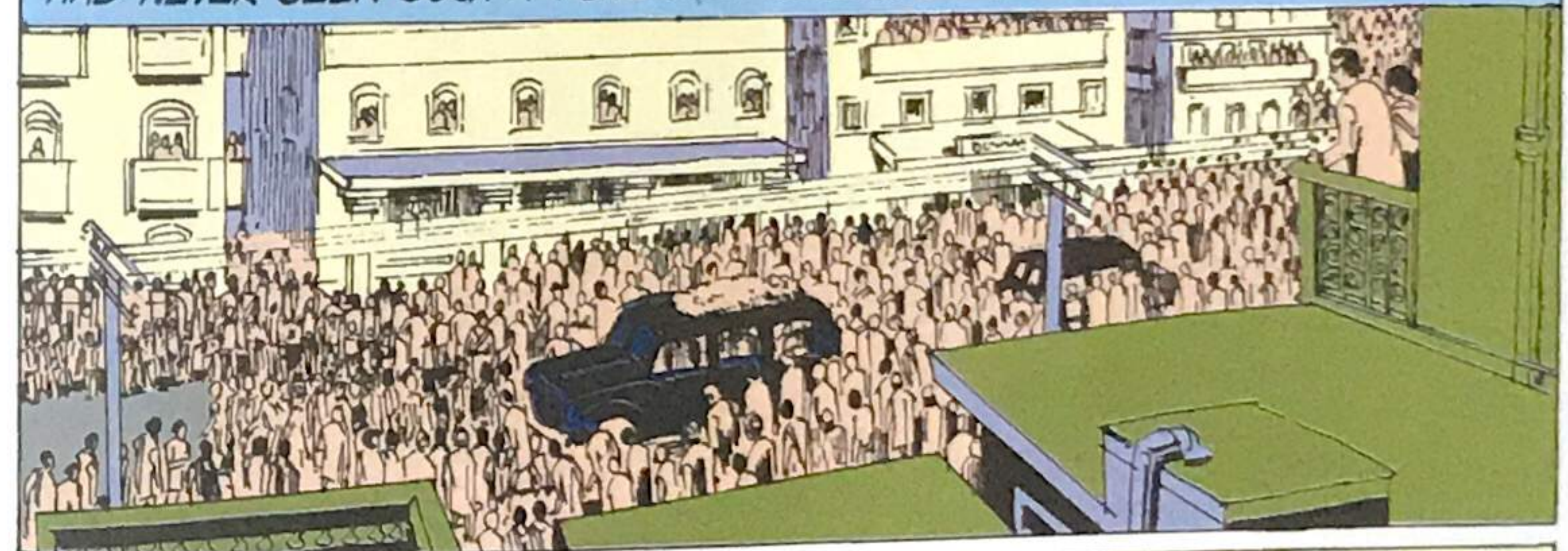


LATER HE INITIATED A VAST CROWD OF FOLLOWERS, NUMBERING OVER THREE LAKHS, INTO BUDDHISM.

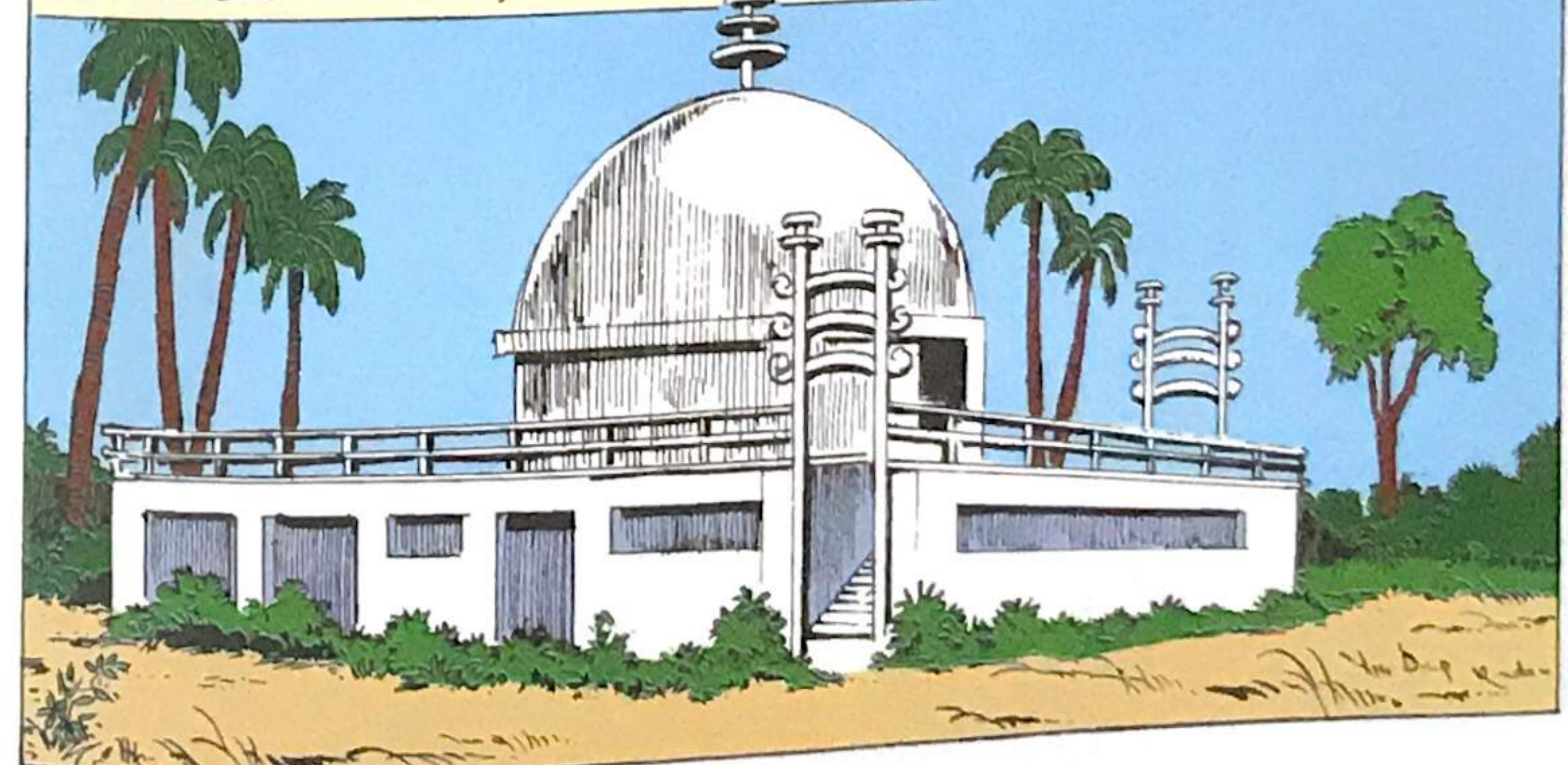
BUDDHAM SARANAM GACCHAMI.

BUDDHAM SARANAM GACCHAMI

SEVEN WEEKS LATER ON DECEMBER 6, 1956, AT HIS DELHI RESIDENCE, DR. AMBEDKAR BREATHED HIS LAST. HIS BODY WAS TAKEN TO BOMBAY THE NEXT DAY. A TWO-MILE LONG CROWD THROGGED AT THE FUNERAL. BOMBAY HAD NEVER SEEN SUCH A FUNERAL PROCESSION BEFORE.



AT THE DADAR CEMETERY THAT EVENING, EMINENT LEADERS PAID THEIR LAST TRIBUTES TO BABASAHEB. THE PYRE WAS LIT ACCORDING TO BUDDHIST RITES AND A GREAT SON OF MOTHER INDIA, WHO HAD FOUGHT VALIANTLY FOR HER OPPRESSED CHILDREN, WAS LAID TO REST.



TRIBUTES TO BABASAHEB AMBEDKAR



"Ambedkar was the architect of our Constitution and his services in various capacities, particularly for the uplift of the Depressed Classes, cannot be exaggerated."
-Dr. Rajendra Prasad.

"Ambedkar was a thoroughly upright person and a man with a keen jurist sense, a proud and irreconcilable heart, great learning and when approached in right spirit, full of friendliness."
-C. Rajagopalachari.

"Ambedkar was known and honoured throughout the world chiefly as a champion of the untouchables. What is perhaps not so well known is that he put a profound impress upon India's major legal structures."
-The New York Times.

"I imagine that the way he will be remembered most will be as a symbol of the revolt against all the oppressive features of Hindu society. He rebelled against something against which all ought to rebel and we have, in fact, rebelled in various degrees.

I have no doubt, whether we agree with him or not in many matters, that perseverance, that persistence, and that, if I may use the word, sometime virulence of his opposition to all this, did keep the people's mind awake and did not allow them to become complacent about matters which could not be forgotten, and helped in rousing up those groups in our country which had suffered for so long in the past."

-Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

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